The Saturday Review of Literature

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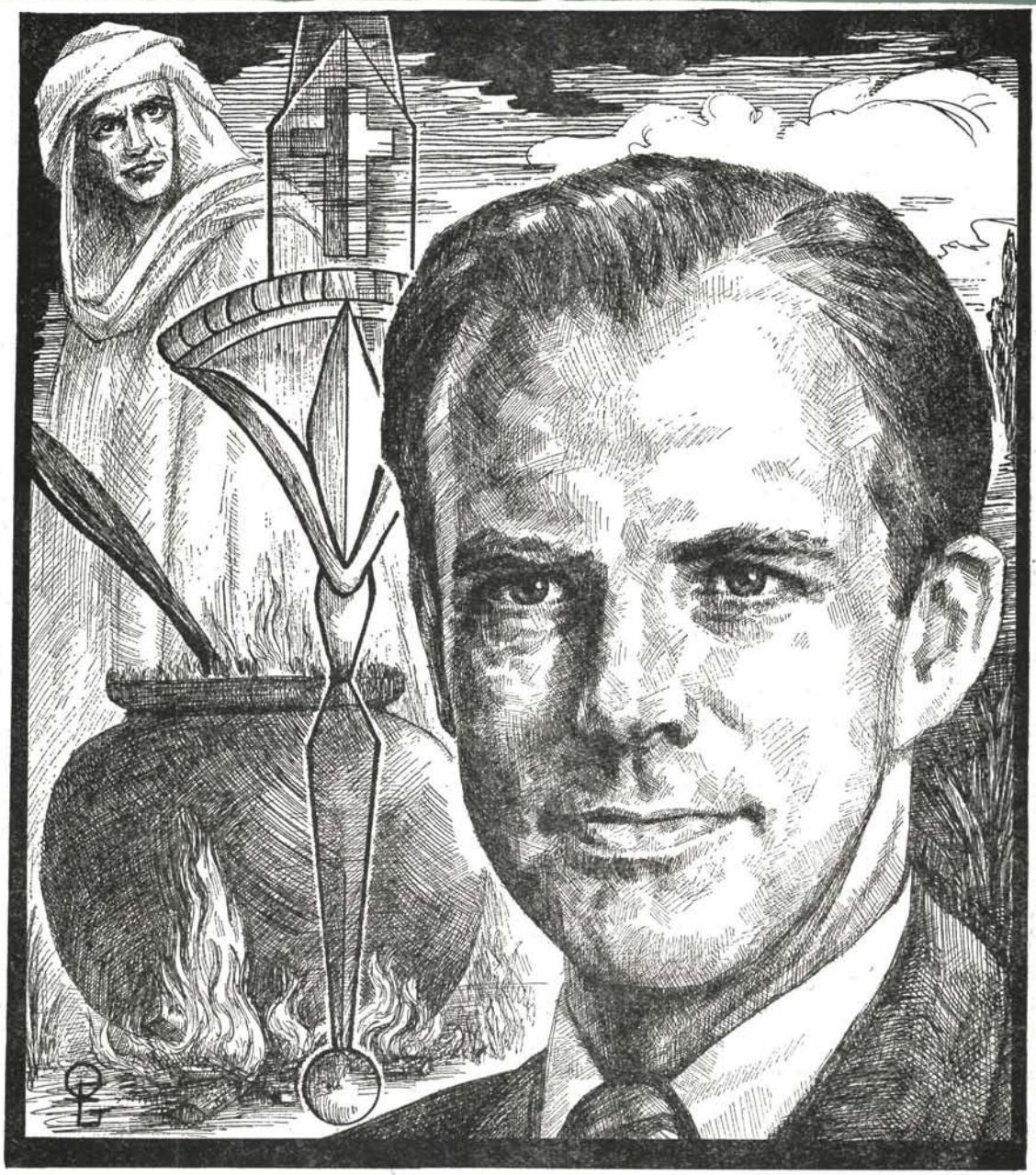

Kenneth Pendar, author of "Adventure in Diplomacy." (See page 7)

Inside the German Mind

By EDUARD C. LINDEMAN

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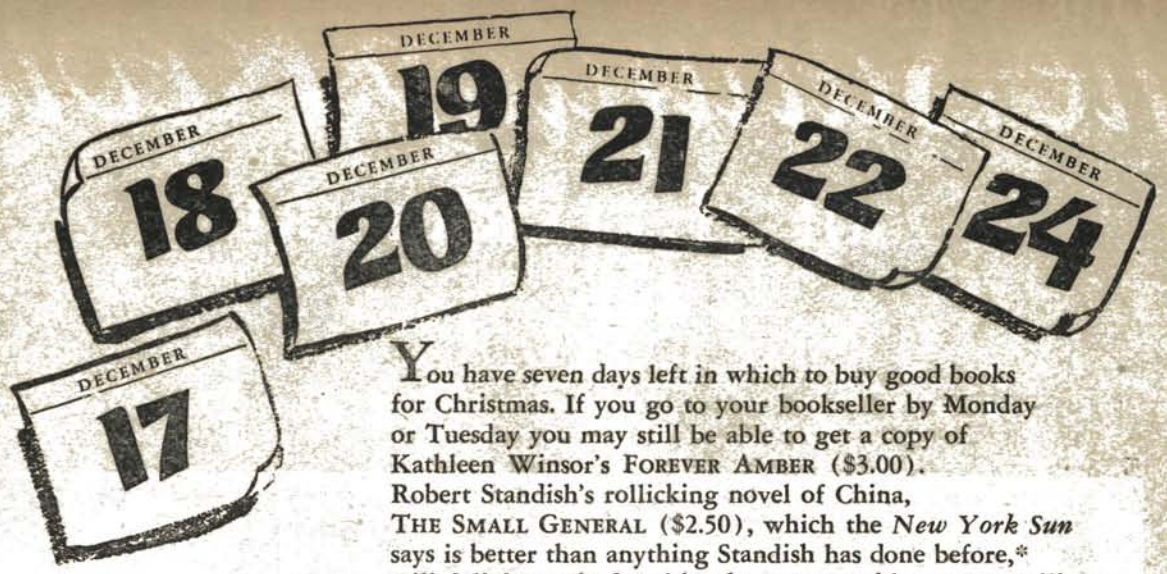

You have seven days left in which to buy good books for Christmas. If you go to your bookseller by Monday or Tuesday you may still be able to get a copy of Kathleen Winsor's FOREVER AMBER ($3.00). Robert Standish's rollicking novel of China, THE SMALL GENERAL ($2.50), which the *New York Sun* says is better than anything Standish has done before,* will delight anybody with a keen sense of humor—as will Robert Molloy's PRIDE'S WAY ($2.75), a wonderful chuckly novel about two eccentric old ladies in Charleston, S. C.**

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*He wrote THE THREE BAMBOOS, so that is high praise indeed.

**PRIDE'S WAY has sold well over 600,000 copies, including Literary Guild.

Newspaperman J. B. Powell brings important figures and events of an exciting quarter-century vividly to life in his MY TWENTY-FIVE YEARS IN CHINA ($3.50). Esther Cloudman Dunn's PURSUIT OF UNDERSTANDING ($2.50) is the autobiography of a distinguished teacher and the story of an American education—a story told with urbanity and wit. Carlton J. H. Hayes, in WARTIME MISSION IN SPAIN ($3.00), gives the first fully authentic report of our policy in regard to Spain. Jane Scrivener's INSIDE ROME WITH THE GERMANS ($2.50) is an absorbing day-by-day record of life in Rome during the German occupation, written by an American working in the Vatican secretariat. Facts for the frontier-minded will be found in George Sundborg's OPPORTUNITY IN ALASKA ($2.50)—a book for the ex-service men and many other people who are turning toward this great undeveloped Territory for work and adventure in a peacetime world. Important books about important Americans are FIGHTING LIBERAL ($3.50), the autobiography of George W. Norris, and Thomas A. Bailey's WOODROW WILSON AND THE GREAT BETRAYAL ($3.50).

And don't forget Rachel Field's PRAYER FOR A CHILD ($1.50), beautifully illustrated by Elizabeth Orton Jones. This Caldecott Medal winner is one of the loveliest children's books ever made.

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WE KNOW JUST HOW YOU FEEL

We, too, have our hands full this time of year.

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Behind the book

WE HAD an idea the other day, and if we are anything like the publishers we think we are, we shall probably have to act upon it, at least for our own pleasure. Every few years we ought to put out a pamphlet that tells what most of our authors never bother to record—how they work. It would be a cinch of a research job *(just go ahead and talk please)* and it would contain stories more different, each from the other, than the most agile plotmaster could dream up. Behind any book there is a story; where the notion came from, why, where, and how it was written. Take, for instance, the story behind one of our favorite novels for teen-agers, Phyllis Crawford's HELLO, THE BOAT!, a book which is already becoming a classic in its field. It sells and sells, year after year. Reading it, you can't help asking how Phyllis Crawford managed to be alive in 1817 and write the novel in 1938. It's a story about a family traveling down the Ohio River from Pittsburgh to Chicago on a storeboat, and it's real to the point of wonderment.

The story behind that book begins with butter molds. From 1935 to 1937 Phyllis Crawford was in charge of research in the New York City unit of the Index of American Design. A lot of American background material of every sort passed by her nose. There was, for instance, a large file of beautiful photographs of early American butter stamps and molds which, if there had been publishing facilities to make a portfolio out of them, required an Introduction. But nobody knew anything about butter molds and there was no direct information available anywhere. It was one of those researches that intrigue the creative mind, the kind where you have to be a very smart sleuth, sneaking up on your subject from every unsuspectable point on its periphery. Phyllis decided to hunt down the story of butter molds, and she started with old books of etiquette.

In early times there was a big chunk of butter in the middle of the table, and a good deal later there were tiny individual butter dishes, which explained the very small butter stamps. Thinking about how one keeps butter led to an investigation of ice houses, and, sure enough, there was a scrap of information about how the use of a mold identified one's product in the local market. (That's where "print" butter started from.) She found out that New England peddlers carried blank molds and carved designs to order.

One of the many angles was discovering what people carried with them during the western exodus in the early 19th century. They must have carried butter molds. Practically all travel was by way of the Ohio River, from 1800 until the railroads began to think about that great surge westward as the most exciting period in our history. "Much better than the gold rush," she called it. "Not greedy. Besides, the river boatmen were such a tough lot." One day she came across a paragraph about an Ohio River storeboat. "In some parts of the river we have seen boats, or floating rooms, with a small flag, indicating that it was a store or shop. They were shelved all round, and contained tin ware, drapery, groceries, etc." Perhaps they sold wooden ware. Butter molds.

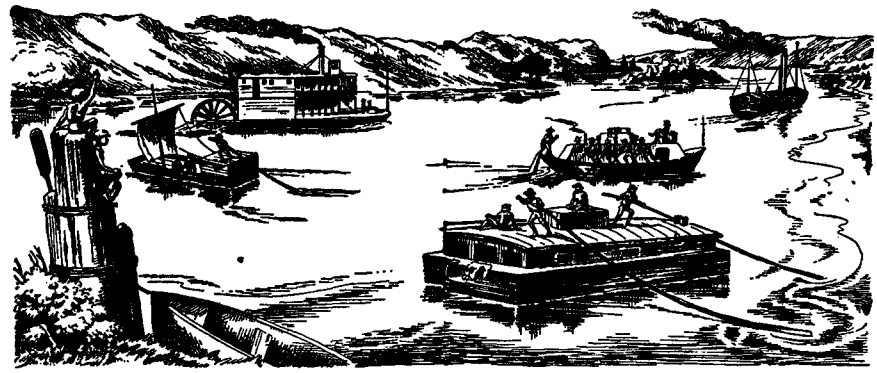
The butter mold research got done, and the book called HELLO, THE BOAT! had started in the author's mind. The Ohio River storeboat idea kept nudging her. What a way to travel! What stories you could tell about those gallant, sound, plain people who went to the Old Northwest. Wouldn't young people love it? Boats they always love, stores they always love. Both? Irresistible.

She had three page references—all brief mentions—on storeboats. She stayed in the 42nd Street Library for two solid months. There was nothing about storeboats in the histories, but there were the diaries and handbooks, and finally she had a lot of information about river travel and life in general during the period. She picked the year 1817 for the story, because it marked the peak of western travel, a time when people were trying to escape the great world depression following the Napoleonic Wars. Then she studied a pilot's manual for the Ohio and Mississippi, the charting of the shoals and riffles that "greatly embarrassed navigation". She learned every turn in the river, the landmarks, the height of banks, the velocity of current. From the records of a dozen careful diarists she was able to compile a weather chart for the Ohio valley, and she knew the average temperature for every month in 1817. She knew when trees budded that year, what crops were planted, what wild flowers appeared when. Peaches, for instance, were in bloom between April 1 and 7. She knew how much things cost; an iron shovel, $2.00; a hand saw 37½ cents; 6 chickens, 50 cents; fresh beef, 4 to 6 cents a pound. She knew what kind of fishing tackle was used and how much the fish weighed. It would break a fisherman's heart—catfish 30 to 40 pounds apiece and perch 3 to 12 pounds. She had titles of books found in backwoods homes in 1816 and 1817 and she knew what people ate and wore, how they built their homes, what tall stories they told. She found the storeboat call, "Hello, the Boat!" in a book called MIKE FINK by Walter Blair and Franklin J. Meine, and a lot of invaluable information about river travel. When it came to the problem of a certain ferry across a creek that used to run by the current, she couldn't quite figure it out, so she tried it out in the bathtub. She rigged up a cable across the tub, attached to it a toy boat and used a hand spray to create a current, thus finding that you had to tack, as if you were sailing a catboat into the wind.

The novel began to write itself. There was a family; a father and a strapping son, a mother and a daughter; and because father and son couldn't run the storeboat alone, there had to be Pappy, a real person Phyllis had read a paragraph about: From the instant she sighted Pappy and his fiddle Katy on the river bank, she let him have a big piece of the story. She tried very hard to avoid false notes. The vocabulary had to be right for these people, and since the diarists had noted Americanisms *(big* and *little,* never *large* and *small; rock* never *stone)* she made long word lists, checking them off as she wrote, so that they wouldn't be overused.

This is one of the reasons HELLO, THE BOAT! is a good book. None of the magnificently detailed research shows in the simple, exciting, human story about that family running a storeboat down the Ohio. The people were those particular people because they had to be; and incident by incident, the story came alive in the author's head. By the time she started to write it, she was really there back in 1817 with a storeboat that cost $500 and a stock of merchandise worth $7500. And the Old Northwest was ahead of her and her wonderful family.

It was a fine evening of talk, getting this story out of Phyllis Crawford, and to us it was yet another page of revelation. We wish all the people who love good books could know as much as we do about what goes into them. Perhaps it is enough that the book is good, and speaks for itself. But knowing how it happened is one of the reasons we like our business.



"HELLO, THE BOAT!"

By PHYLLIS CRAWFORD

Pictures by EDWARD LANING • $2.00

AT ALL BOOKSTORES

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The Saturday Review of Literature

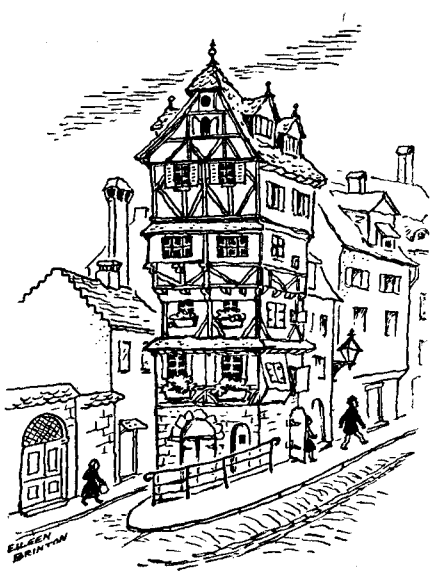
Inside The German Mind

EDUARD C. LINDEMAN

A VISITOR'S life in occupied Germany is an uneasy affair. I shall not soon forget my first night in the German town of Nienberg, headquarters of the British Thirtieth Army Corps. It was here that I was briefed for my mission, a series of lectures to British troops on public opinion in America. Colonel X had taken me to his room in a house formerly occupied by one of the leading citizens of Nienberg. We had examined the former occupant's library and found a well-read two-volume set of Houston Chamberlain's "Grundlage des Neunsehnjahrhunderts," that traitorous work which did so much to encourage Nazi racism. Later as we walked through an alley to my quarters and heard muffled conversations behind drawn curtains in unlighted houses, I said: "What goes on in the minds of these Germans?" The colonel answered, "I wish I knew. They baffle me completely." At that moment I decided to seek an answer to my question, and during my entire stay in the British Zone I continued my attack on that wall which surrounds the dark chamber of the German mind.

During the first four days, I lived in a spectral world. I saw no smiles on German faces, not even of children. I rode in Army jeeps. When we tried to pass farmers' carts on the road, the Germans would appear not to hear our horn, and only at the last moment would they move aside, allowing us barely enough room to pass. As they turned their carts they turned their faces, as well, away from us. I watched the sullen countenance of a German soldier, clad in a long trench coat and wearing his green campaign cap, who was plowing with a team of oxen near the roadside, but his eyes did not meet mine. In that maze of destruction which was once the proud city of Hanover, I asked a German woman how to get to the autobahn. Her eyes bulged, she gave a nervous shriek, and acted as though she were about to succumb to hysteria. A young soldier stepped before her, pushed her aside, and gruffly asked me what I wanted. This strange atmosphere of non-communication came suddenly to an end which left me with an added perplexity.

In the medieval town of Goslar, which nestles so easily in the foothills of the Hartz Mountains, I heard children laughing in the streets. I was met at the officers' club (formerly the leading hotel) by a German clerk who bowed and scraped and behaved with obnoxious servility. At first I concluded that this sharp distinction in conduct was due to the fact that Goslar had not been bombed, but this opinion was later altered. Slowly it dawned upon me that these Germans had not yet decided upon the most advantageous attitude to assume toward the forces of occupation. They were conducting tests and observing the results. They were also promoting a none too subtle form of propaganda. In Hanover I was told that it was an unhappy fate which had brought Germany into war with Great Britain and with the United States. Was there not an ancient cultural and blood relationship between Hanover and England? Had they not been governed by the same king for more than two centuries? And was it not obvious that the western peoples had but one true enemy, Soviet Russia? I am happy to report that the British forces of occupation have their defenses up. They are not taken in by this device.



In Hanover, a class of some forty adolescent boys were being taught religion in a secondary school. As I entered the classroom the teacher handed me a lesson-sheet, the story of St. John the Baptist. He then stepped before the class and said: "It might be advisable to begin our lesson today with a short historical background. Is it not odd, for example, that you German boys should be studying the life of this great man when you realize that as he began his mission, his call to repentence, he found his country occupied by foreign troops?" I could tell from the sly glances of the boys that they knew precisely what effect the teacher was attempting to create. This teacher was reported to the authorities.

AT the Luneburg trial, I encountered the first sign that some Germans were beginning to make cultural comparisons. One of the galleries was reserved for German visitors. They sat facing the Belsen prisoners. During the intermissions, I talked with these Germans, mostly professors and lawyers. They were profoundly impressed, not merely by the dignity with which the British were conducting the trial but by the obvious contrast with Nazi "justice." One of them said to me as we watched the prisoners returning to their seats: "No, I do not think any other people in the world except you Anglo-Saxons would do this." This seemed to me a significant observation, particularly as I had thus far encountered only sneers at every mention of democratic ideas.

While in Goslar I was advised not to miss hearing a certain elderly preacher, Deunsing by name, since he had resisted the Nazis and was besides the most scholarly pastor in the region. He presided over the Marktkirche, a gloomy twelfth-century edifice located in the heart of the medieval section of the town. On the Sunday I visited his church, October 14, the text of Pastor Deunsing's sermon was "Es ist böse Zeit" (These are

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evil times). He began his dissertation on a high philosophical plane, reminding his congregation that they must learn to distinguish between truth and knowledge. The truth, he said, is still there and available, but unfortunately Germans could not reach it because they were not in possession of the right variety of knowledge. The old truth must be rediscovered by means of new knowledge. He then raised the question of knowledge regarding sin. Bluntly he asked: "Are Germans more guilty than others respecting the calamity which has fallen upon our world?" After a long hesitation he answered: "No, not unless Germans have sinned more." He then proceeded to illustrate by examining the commandment Thou Shalt Not Steal. "These days," he said, "everybody steals and thus we may conclude that we live in a sinful world. But a distinction must be made: we little people steal but we steal only little things. The big people, they steal big things. Whole provinces, even whole nations, they steal." He brought his sermon to a close with these solemn words: "You must not return to your homes with despair in your hearts. In the long view it is entirely possible that Germans will profit from this catastrophe. Certainly we are destined to suffer most, and he who suffers is thereby cleansed."

FRATERNIZATION is frowned upon in the British Zone and where it exists at all there is close supervision. German girls are invited to dance with British soldiers on Saturday nights. The burgomeister issues the invitations and the dances begin at six-thirty and end at ten in the evening. Usually there are two to three German married couples in attendance. I observed several of these affairs and found them to be exceedingly dull entertainment.

On one occasion German technicians employed in a nearby munitions plant were invited for Sunday afternoon tea with British officers. As I moved about the room, I detected a steady flow of thinly veiled arrogance. I asked several guests to explain Germany's defeat. Their answers fitted into a simple pattern: either the sheer numerical odds were too great or some leader, perhaps Hitler himself, had made an error in judgment. When I suggested that free people might be expected to fight a more versatile and persistent battle, they pretended not to understand my meaning.

Perhaps the most poignant moment of this strange experience among persons who seemed somehow not to belong to the world I knew came while I was talking with a former professor of the University of Goettingen. I had pressed him for an explanation of the German "sickness," and finally, with a weary gesture, he exclaimed: "But, Professor Lindeman, you will never understand, because you see at bottom the trouble with us Germans is this: We hate ourselves." I insisted that this diagnosis must also belong to the realm of the explainable, but he then refused to continue the conversation and acted as though he regretted having made this unusual statement.

What is one to conclude from an examination of these selected glimpses into the German mind? Presumably each reader will make varying interpretations based in part upon his perspective and his former knowledge of German culture. Out of my bewilderment I finally arrived at certain conclusions which may be used as guides to understanding. But first of all, I must add that it is of the highest importance that we Americans should understand contemporary Germans. The conditions of a future Germany are being set by us and by the other three Allies whose armies occupy German territory. If a decent and humane Germany rises on the ruins of the destroyed and illegal Nazi state, we shall have been its architects. If, on the contrary, a mean-spirited, arrogant, and vindictive Germany arises to bedevil the world again, this too will be our responsibility. We imposed unconditional surrender upon Germany and in that act assumed the prerogative of furnishing the conditions under which a new Germany might be created. This was and is a terrifying responsibility, and there is little evidence in history to warrant its success. But we cannot now withdraw. The commitment stands. Our own future as a nation is deeply involved in the German issue, and it is for this reason that we should be giving to this enterprise our finest talents. Because I feel so deeply about the consequence of this venture, I shall state my conclusions regarding the German mind in terms which may be readily translated into policy.

— From the *Chicago Daily News*

Back to School

WE MUST begin, I believe, by assuming it is now possible for strong leadership to corrupt an entire nation. Given control over the modern instruments of communication, inclusive of the press, the radio, motion pictures, and education, corruption of public opinion can become universal. This I believe happened in Germany. Any other partialized assumption will lead to error.

When the strata of the sensitive and humane citizens of a modern nation are removed, degenerates will rise to the surface and they will rule. This happened in Germany. The same thing would happen in any of the advanced cultures of our age.

Democratic institutions and modes of life cannot be imposed upon the existing generation of Germans. If a plant is to flourish, it requires something besides soil. It needs the appropriate bacilli in the soil to liberate the proper nutritive elements. The appropriate bacilli for the liberation of democratic ideas do not exist in the Germany left by Hitler.

It would be extremely naive of us to expect that we can re-condition Germans by means of guilt and punishment. There are no signs of a guilt-feeling among Germans, and if we count on this motivation, we are lost.

In short, my conclusions all lead to a single point, namely, that the key to Germany's future must be so constructed as to open two doors, one leading to a warless world and the other to free education. The armies of occupation can disarm the German nation. Military government can establish a dubious form of order and stability. Technicians can assist in restoring Germany's industrial and agricultural productivity. These are simple tasks. The difficult undertaking is to make room for Germans who will have no need of fear or hate or envy. This task requires the highest sort of competence available, and the qualities needed are those of the educator.

Edward C. Lindeman is professor of Social Philosophy in the New York School of Social Work, Columbia University. He has recently returned from a mission in occupied Germany, where he served as educational adviser to the British Army.

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A Hornet's Nest of Trouble

ADVENTURE IN DIPLOMACY: OUR FRENCH DILEMMA. By Kenneth Pendar. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1945. 272 pp. $3.

Reviewed by VARIAN FRY

MUCH ink is destined to flow from many pens, and many persons are doomed to be disturbed by the ceaseless tapping of their neighbor journalists' and historians' typewriters, before the question is finally resolved whether United States policy toward the Vichy government of France, in North Africa, and toward General Charles de Gaulle and his French Committee of Liberation was "right" or "wrong," wise or unwise. In fact, it may never be resolved to the satisfaction of persons living at the time. Like many another heated controversy in human history, it may have to wait until all those whose emotions were engaged on one side or the other have passed to their eternal reward before there can be general agreement about it. Until that distant day, those of us who are interested in getting at the truth behind the controversy will have to read, as they appear, many *ex parte* books about it.

Kenneth Pendar's "Adventure in Diplomacy" is such a book. Of its kind it is a good one—honest, unpretentious, and deeply sincere. Yet it is neither "objective" nor, at times, entirely fair. Because its author was himself one of the executants of our French policy, it hardly could be.

Mr. Pendar was working in the Harvard Library in the spring of 1941 when a friend told him that the Army and the Navy were recruiting men to act as observers in North Africa to check on the ultimate destination of the American goods which were to be shipped there under the terms of the economic agreements which Robert Murphy had concluded with General Maxime Weygand. He volunteered for the work, was accepted, and sent to Africa, where, in his own words, he and his fellow control officers "had front line seats for two years at one of the most curious and important diplomatic dramas of our time."

In the course of those two years Mr. Pendar came to the conclusion that our policy which was to deal with all Frenchmen who would resist the Germans and to refuse to recognize General de Gaulle and his group as the sole spokesmen for France, was right in principle but often faulty in application. It was right in principle, Mr. Pendar discovered, because "millions of men and women in France and especially in North Africa preserved an almost mystic faith in Marshal Pétain. . . . In North Africa, especially, the Pétainists formed an overwhelming majority. No attack on our part could have shaken that faith; the British attack [at Mers-el-Kebir] merely confirmed and strengthened it. They were not unpatriotic or pro-German, those Pétainists: in our two years in North Africa, we met almost no pro-Nazis. They were simply blindly, idolatrously sure that Pétain was wisely and skilfully preserving all that could be saved of France. No one could sway that belief; they had to discover its erroneousness for themselves. Our patience with them, our enduring friendship, did much to keep totalitarian poison from seeping into many misguided French minds. We proved to them that they had strong loyal friends on the democratic side."

This conclusion Mr. Pendar reached despite the fact that when he volunteered for his North African assignment he was "pro-de Gaulle and inclined to think all Vichyites must be traitors." In the course of his work in North Africa he was forced to change his opinion about General de Gaulle and the Frenchmen who called themselves de Gaullists. He found "anti-democratic, totalitarian tendencies" in de Gaullism. He came to recognize "that de Gaulle, who really is a great man in the Carlyle sense, is great in all the wrong ways, in ways that are ominous for the peace and happiness of France and of Europe." The General "sullenly" refused "to coöperate with his own allies, or even with violently anti-German Frenchmen who would not swear blind allegiance to him. Frenchmen commented bitterly that he never made one anti-Nazi speech: his speeches were directed solely against other French factions." During the Tunisian campaign, when

our military situation and that of the French were far from assured, de Gaullist agents "persuaded men and officers alike to desert to de Gaulle with offers of better pay and more rank." In New York, at the same time, de Gaullists caused so many desertions amongst the crews of French warships, including the great battleship *Richelieu*, that Secretary of the Navy Knox was twice obliged to reprimand them, and their factionalism "so retarded the Allied war effort that American authorities began to take a very gloomy view of the desirability of continuing to arm the French."

But this is not all that Mr. Pendar learned about de Gaulle and the de Gaullists. Around the person of General de Gaulle himself he found an alarming "mystique," an "almost hushed reverence" such as "is almost always associated with totalitarian ideas and ways." General de Gaulle's anti-British and anti-American feelings also became obvious to him. He noticed that many de Gaullists displayed "a dangerous and touchy brand of nationalism." But he also found that General de Gaulle and his associates used totalitarian methods, including arbitrary arrest and detention, terroristic police methods, and a "typically fascist way" of handling the Algerian newspapers: not only was the entire press under open and severe political censorship, but the de Gaullist propaganda was scurrilous and ruthless. Finally, the de Gaullist underground movement in France was "more a propaganda organization than a military one," and had been infiltrated by German agents.

In case anyone who has read this far should find himself inclining to dismiss Kenneth Pendar as a typical striped-pants diplomat seeking to justify his government's policy by blackening the opposition, I should perhaps point out that he not only comes from South Dakota but also walks on his hands, a refreshingly undiplomatic accomplishment which he once demonstrated to a group of Arab boys in Morocco, to their intense delight. Perhaps I should point out also that, according to his own testimony, when he first arrived in Morocco his French friends called him "the most de Gaullist of the American Vice-Consuls."

But perhaps I should do more. Perhaps I should state, what is the truth, that my own observations in France under Vichy—I spent more than a year there—corresponded very closely to Mr. Pendar's observations in North Africa. I was astonished to learn, upon my return to the United States, just before Pearl Harbor, that here

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General de Gaulle was a hero *of the liberals*. In France he was considered, at best, an ardent nationalist and a sincere patriot, but most of his followers were believed to be Cagoulards, members of the secret Fascist band of "Hooded Men," and the de Gaullist underground was certainly regarded as reckless. In New York de Gaullist circles there was certainly a "mystique" around the General, and factionalism was certainly rife; too often one had the impression that the de Gaullists here were more intent on fighting other Frenchmen than they were on driving the Germans out of their country.

But that was before the vigorous undergrounds had united behind de Gaulle in the spring of 1943. That unification certainly brought a change in the nature of de Gaullism, reducing the factionalism and very considerably increasing the democracy in it. One of the most serious criticisms that can be made of Mr. Pendar's book is that it does not recognize any change in the nature of de Gaullism from the beginning to the end.

Another serious fault is Mr. Pendar's tendency to pass over with very little mention some of the worst mistakes of American policy. By severely criticizing General Auguste Nogues, the Vichy commander who resisted our landings in Morocco, by stating quite frankly that General Henri Honoré Giraud, our candidate for commander-in-chief of the French armies, was politically naive, and by recognizing the weakness of Robert Murphy, Mr. Pendar succeeds in giving the impression that he is being eminently fair to both sides. Yet he hardly says anything at all about the appalling *gaffe* we made when we brought Marcel Peyrouton, formerly Minister of the Interior in Vichy, from Argentina to Africa to be governor of Algeria. In general he does not seem to recognize how literally impossible it was, with French nerves in the delicate state they were at the time, for American governmental representatives to deal with prominent members of the Vichy government, for whatever purpose, without stirring up a hornet's nest of trouble. In this respect his treatment of the Darlan episode also seems to me somewhat one-sided.

Yet there is much that anyone who is not yet persuaded that in human controversies one side is always all white and the other all black can learn from Mr. Pendar's book. Certainly it should compel the most severe critics of our French policy in the difficult Vichy years to modify their judgment. It should open their eyes to many complexities in the situ-

ation to which they were wilfully or otherwise blind at the time. And it should help to remove from the shoulders of men like Robert Murphy, who were honestly trying to carry out a difficult policy not of their making, the onus of much of the unfair criticism which has been heaped upon them.

It should also prove very entertaining reading for all those who enjoy intimate glimpses of great men in moments of relaxation. Mr. Pendar was host at La Saadia, the fabulous house at Marrakech where President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill rested after their Casablanca conference. The chapter on that episode, with its picture of Mr. Churchill flopping around in his "siren suit" of heavy blue flannel, made like a union suit, and wearing black velvet slippers with the initials "W. C." embroidered on them, its account of the preparations and exertions of Louis the butler, and its apparently faithful recording of unguarded conversations between "Winston" and "Mr. President," is not only the most interesting in the book but throws new light on the relations between the two Allied leaders.

There is also in the book a good deal of information not previously made public, so far as I know, about the anti-German and anti-Italian activities of a number of prominent Vichy officials, among them the statement that, while he was general delegate of the French government in North Africa, General Weygand "performed the really remarkable feat of photographing every document sent out or received by the German or Italian Armistice Commissions." All in all, then, "Adventure in Diplomacy" is a book which every serious student of American foreign policy, and all of its critics, will have to read, and which many others can read with pleasure and profit.

Your Literary I. Q.

By Howard Collins

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS IN POETRY

Miss Margaret Schorr, of Brooklyn, asks you to fill in the blanks, in the quotations below, with the names of musical instruments. Allowing 5 points for each correct answer, a score of 60 is par, 70 is very good, 80 or better is excellent. Answers are on page 15.

1. There let the pealing ..... blow
   To the full-voiced choir below.
2. Then while they paced a city all on fire
   With sun and cloth of gold, the ..... blew.
3. She'd git 'er little ..... an' she'd sing, *"Kulla-lo-lo!"*
4. *Bang, whang, whang* goes the ....., *tootle-te-tootle* the .....
5. It was an Abyssinian maid, and on her ..... she played.
6. Ah, take the Cash, and let the Credit go,
   Nor heed the rumble of a distant ..... !
7. Aye, when we're strong and braced and manful,
   Life's a sweet .....
8. The tangled bine-stems scored the sky,
   Like strings from broken .....
9. And angels meeting us shall sing
   To their ..... and .....
10. Awakening up, he took her hollow .....
11. And near, the beat of the alarming .....
    Roused up the soldier ere the morning star.
12. There's a ..... caroling across a golden street.
13. Sound, sound the ....., fill the ..... !
14. Sharp ..... proclaim
    Their jealous pangs and desperation.
15. And from his blazoned baldric slung
    A mighty silver ..... hung.
16. Make me thy ....., even as the forest is.
17. The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
    For he heard the loud .....
18. I am thine ..... between thine hands, O mother!
19. Drop thy ....., thy happy .....;
    Sing thy songs of happy cheer.
20. And ever the great ..... overhead
    Boomed in the wind a knell for the dead.

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Strictly Personal

HYPOCRISY BEGINS AT HOME

OUR society is going through a period when our folkways are changing at an unusually rapid pace. For those who do not consider life an adventure, rapidity of change is uncomfortable. We do not have, as a people, an enviable record for adjusting to changing mores gracefully and intelligently. The institutions which should be giving us the knowledge and wisdom necessary to intelligent adjustment—our educational institutions, churches, the radio, press, movies—have serviced us inadequately. One result of this is to promote a long period between the inception of a new idea and its full acceptance into the folkways of the people—a period characterized by a shocking inconsistency between the idea which we have begun to accept intellectually and our responsibility as individuals towards the practical application of the new concept. This conflict is evident in many sectors of life, but two examples serve to illustrate the point.

As a nation we are opposed to people being pushed around because of race, creed, or color. We have reached that point of ethical development where the extermination of millions of Jews in Europe by the Nazis is not considered a program solely for the Jews involved, for other Jews, or for the conscience of the German people. We have come to the point where we recognize, in theory at least, man's concern for the freedom and dignity of his fellow man without reference to national boundaries, religious affiliations, personal acquaintance, or sympathy with the people currently being pushed around. We are, however, in that transition period in which we cannot face the problem intelligently enough to assess our own responsibility as a nation towards the protection and rehabilitation of the pushees. Thus, we protest as a people that an Arab land must make room for at least one hundred thousand Jews. We rail against Great Britain for failing to permit such immigration into Palestine. But few, if any, of our statesmen or religious leaders have had the clarity of thought or the faith in the vision of the American people to state flatly that the United States is a vast land and that we could take in ten or twenty thousand refugees as our share of the civilized world's responsibility to the pushees without any embarrassment to our folkways or our economy. In hypocritic confusion we find it easier to demand that others provide havens or refuge while we refuse even to absorb the handful of Oswego refugees admitted into this country as an emergency measure

In the long run, such confusion of thinking and such inability to assess and assume our obligations will not gain us the respect of any people on this earth. We would do better to propose a Planetary Refugee Budget—each and every nation to do its share, not for Jews or Catholics or Freemasons or Poles or Greeks, but for human beings. The total budget might be set at half a million. Let Australia take in, for example, five thousand refugees, Canada ten thousand, New Zealand two thousand, the United States thirty thousand, the Arab lands fifteen thousand, England three thousand, et cetera—in effect dividing among the lands of the world which can sustain refugees a proper proportionate quota of those beaten Europeans who are unwilling to remain in Europe even if the United Nations offered them (as they should) opportunity of reestablishing themselves in their native lands with a grubstake of property seized from Nazis. For those who desire to take up life elsewhere, every nation in the world owes an obligation of hospitality. But as our present stand appears to the world, we shut our doors and urge in sanctimonious dicta that other nations open theirs.

This is one example of the inconsistency of our beliefs and our actions in regard to an international problem. On the domestic front, the recent debate over Mrs. Truman's failure to take affirmative action against the D.A.R. because of the banning of Negro performers from Constitution Hall has served to highlight another field of hypocrisy. Curiously enough, much of the heated criticism leveled against Mrs. Truman for her failure to boycott the D.A.R. has been uttered in restaurants and night clubs which admit no Negroes. Let me state at this point that my personal preference is for people who fight bigotry with the forthrightness of an Eleanor Roosevelt. But I am moved to wonder about the right of any of us to criticize Mrs. Truman's failure to wage the righteous fight, who do not personally and diligently boycott every single hotel, restaurant, night club, theatre, or college where Negroes are not made welcome. Again here our failure to appraise our own individual responsibilities to the achievement of the Negro's rightful place in society has left "us" in the anomalous position of knowing the other fellow's duty, but not our own. I include myself among the "us."

Perhaps part of this problem of the period of hypocrisy may be shrugged away by the rationalization that man is a slow animal and takes long to adjust his actions to his new ideas. On the other hand, man has become very facile in absorbing new ideas on other than an ethical plane. Less than four months after the nation learned of the splitting of the atom, the man in the street has begun to think of his future in terms of atomic energy. In the face of this facility of adjustment, we cannot glibly toss aside our failure to adjust quickly to ethical and intellectual novelty by reference to that popular scapegoat Human Nature. Some of the failure on these scores may perhaps be attributed to the fact that the refugee and Negro problems have received less effective publicity and intelligent discussion than the atomic bomb. And this in turn is partially explained by the fact that the organs for the development of the mind of man—press, radio, and movies—have become so concentrated in the hands of a few people that diversity of opinion and the kind of championing of new causes that arises in a competitive marketplace of thought have substantially evaporated. Four radio networks dominate the air waves. Five motion picture companies account for more than three quarters of all the movie admissions paid in this country. Only one hundred and seventeen cities have daily newspaper competition. Eleven states have not a single city with competitive daily newspapers. Consequently a handful of men can effectively prevent the public from receiving adequate information regarding a given idea. Under such circumstances, any change of folkways occurs in an area of insufficient debate. Truth cannot win out in an inadequate marketplace of thought.

MORRIS L. ERNST.

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EZRA POUND

HOW GREAT a poet was Ezra Pound is open to question. Some of his poems belong to the permanent literature of the United States—a country which for many years he has attacked ignorantly and with contempt. Yet the false scholarship, the excessive eccentricity, and the confused thought and emotion of much of his poetical work show something less than greatness. As a technician, he was superb. As literary pioneer and prophet, he foresaw in the early nineteen hundreds literary trends of the future; indeed some of his poems read now incredibly as if they had been written in what was then the future. Unquestionably he was powerful in shaping and strengthening the modes and tendencies of at least two decades, and his influence upon some of his younger contemporaries can scarcely be exaggerated.

Yet this is no alibi for a charge of treason. A poet, even more than an ordinary man, is responsible in proportion to his talents. The excerpts from Pound's Italian broadcasts attacking the Allied cause and America in wartime are proof that he was a traitor to his country. They are proof of an even more deadly charge for which he might be tried in Nuremberg, if not here. He was a traitor, and especially as man of letters, to the cause of humanity and of civilization. He preferred the Fascist way, and urged that brute power should be allowed to succeed by brutality. He despised his fellow men, except tyrants, their instruments, and their parasites, because he desired a world order in which Mussolinis and Ezra Pounds could satisfy their egomanias.

Pound's punishment should fit his crime. As a poet, he deserves death. But Pound the man, when he was not a verse-maker, Pound of the broadcasts, the prose pamphlets, and private letters, was a muddled and mediocre mind, easily deluded by childish fallacies in government and economics. And this mind was clearly an unbalanced mind, unable to disentangle reality from wishful thinking. He was, as many unpublished documents, and some published ones, show, intemperate, abusive, violent without discrimination, obscene, and mendacious in his language to a degree that in a less scientific age would have been called insanity, but for which modern psychiatry has a more accurate name. As a poet, when he was a poet, Pound was responsible. But when he was not a poet, and often when he was writing poetry that lacked only a balanced mind behind it to make it great, he was irresponsible. His vituperative letters were often a far more serious condemnation of himself than of his enemies.

Such a man should not escape penalty for his misdeeds. The analogy with the great Dante who attacked his native Florence from his place of exile will not hold for an instant, and not because of the disparity between the men. Dante with all his faction was driven out of Florence in what amounted to civil war. It would have been death for him to have returned. He changed his skies and his allegiance by necessity. Pound, an expatriate by choice, retained his American citizenship, expecting that if he came home he would be howled at for his incivilities. Instead, when he did come, he was invited to dinners!

Death is not the right punishment for a muddled mind, whose treason, even, was muddled and ineffective. Louis Untermeyer has suggested that he be given life imprisonment in a cell lined with the poetry of Eddie Guest. Mr. Pound would probably prefer hanging. But let his punishment fit the crime. H. S. C.

LET THEM LIVE

FORTY-TWO periodicals formerly issued by and for the inmates of American federal and state penal institutions have been among the less publicized war casualties. In 1935 a record total of 127 prison papers was being published, but this figure loses some of its impressiveness when one reflects that, even in that halcyon era of penological journalism, not quite two-thirds of the country's prisons issued no papers. Today, according to a compilation made by Herman K. Spector which appears in *Tomorrow*, only eighty-five are being issued.

Prison journals, like their editors, have had a checkered history. The earliest of the group, the *Summary* of Elmira (New York) Reformatory, appeared in 1883 and died untimely. *Our Paper*, initiated at Massachusetts State Reformatory in 1885, and the *Prison Mirror* of Minnesota, which began in 1887, were of sturdier stuff and still survive. By 1930 the total had grown to thirty-four. The depression years saw the figure soar to the 127 record. "The public had other worries than the coddling of prisoners," suggests Mr. Spector. But the war gave the make-it-tough school of penal administrators the opportunity to inflict the death penalty on a third of the total.

Only the most cynical, disillusioned, and hard-boiled of officialdom, one would think, would take such drastic action. Freedom of the press, however controlled (and controlled, preferably, by an intelligent staff of inmate editors), is one freedom which should still be permitted to flourish in a place which is itself the negation of freedom. J. T. W.

For a Yellow Bird Dead on a City Roof

By Melville Cane

WHAT brutal gale
Has lifted you, stupefied, frail,
And leaflike,
Out of your sunny orbit, torn from a gentler zone,
And blown you, helpless as a snowflake,
Against this wall of stone!

Here in the icy air,
Dropped on a city roof
You lie, wings furled, breath stopped,
Wrapped in a shroud of grime.
Inexorable as time,
Corruption eats away the feathery gold
To rattish gray,
While, slowly, cold decay
Deletes the final trace
Of ethereal grace.

Now the sweeper shovels off
A stiffened crust,
A hollow shell of song forever lost.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Tight Little Isles

SIR: Mr. Harold Fields in his review of "Dynamite on Our Doorstep" [*SRL* November 10] writes, "There are 2,000,000 who live on a little island less than 150 miles long and thirty-five miles wide," *i.e.* 5250 sq. mi. This sounds dreadful as Mr. Fields writes it, but is it? The area of Long Island is 1400 sq. mi, and the population is 4,600,000, and the real estate people at least feel there is room for plenty more.

WAYNE SHIRLEY

Brooklyn, N.Y.

It's An Old Story

SIR: The question of large vs. small books has been with us for some time—in fact, since the middle of the third century B.C. At that time sensible people found small books best and idiots found large books best, as usual. Under the great Egyptian bookman of that time, Ptolemy Philadelphus, what went for books (rolls of papyrus) were changed from enormous and unwieldy affairs to rolls of small and convenient size, which proved exceedingly popular and were adopted generally from then on. One of the leading grammarians of the day, Callimachus, stated our modern problem quite definitely when he said, "A big book is a big nuisance." Has it not, ever since, been so?

THEODORE PRATT

Boca Raton, Fla.

Par for Whaling Yarns

SIR: Some "kind" friend called my attention to Mr. Cerf's column in the *SRL* of November 17 and to the following paragraph:

" 'Moby Dick' sells in several editions for a dollar or less. 'The Manatee' sells for $2.50. Somebody, obviously, has to make up that fee for Russell Birdwell. And here am I, helping him earn it!"

I see by the papers that Mr. Cerf's firm has also just published "a robust novel of the whaling days" and that the price of this novel is $2.50. Following the same reasoning, am I and other readers expected to assume that Mr. Cerf's firm is also taxing each purchaser of the book the same amount in order to pay for the publicity?

JOHN MACRAE, JR.

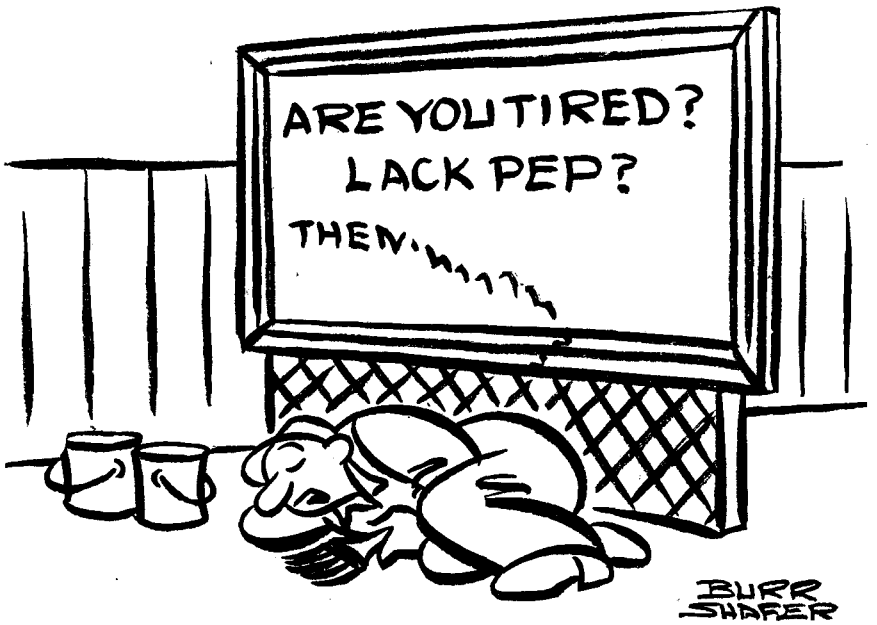
New York, N.Y.

Noblesse Oblige

SIR: When pale purple young men use the word *belles-lettres* and, in their exuberance with the last syllable of it, spitbathe all those in front of them, I think it is time we got back to the genius of our language and used a word of our own. You, as the literary magazine of America, ought to take a stand on this matter and maintain it. Two such stern mothers of America as H. L. Mencken and Bernard DeVoto have feebly attempted to translate this word. Mr. Mencken, who hit on alliteration as being in our genius, missed on his choice of the attribute and was besides trying for humor when he translated the word *lovely letters*. Mr. DeVoto has translated it *beautiful letters*, believing, I suppose, that anything is better than *belles-lettres*—and quite rightly. Surely *someone* along the line has called it *fine letters*. *Beaux-arts*, after all, came into our language as *fine arts*, which has dignity and says it our way. Wouldn't you like to please an aging woman by establishing *fine letters* before I die?

ORAH COLE BRISCOE

Bloomington, Ind.



This Way, Friends of J. J. J.

SIR: I am undertaking a biographical study of the nineteenth-century American art critic and collector James Jackson Jarves, a number of whose early Italian paintings have been in the Yale University Art Gallery since 1868. I should greatly appreciate hearing from anyone who has letters or other documents relating to Jarves.

FRANCIS STEEGMULLER

145 West 58th St.,
New York 19, N.Y.

Anyway, Alex Got the Idea

SIR: In Thomas Sugrue's review of "The Practical Cogitator" [*SRL*, November 10] he says in the first paragraph, " . . . a distillation of mountain dew that has been collecting on the fields since Diogenes the Cynic told Alexander the Great to stand between him and the sun, thereby to provide a little shade and thus be of some use in the world."

Mr. Sugrue has his wires crossed. "The Encyclopedia Americana," vol. 9, page 133, says in substance: "In Corinth, one hot summer day, Alexander found him [Diogenes] on the roadside basking in the sun—probably sitting in his tub—and astonished at the indifference with which the ragged beggar regarded him, entered into conversation with him, saying, 'I'm Alexander the Great,' to which the philosopher answered, 'And I am Diogenes the Cynic.' Alexander finally gave him permission to ask for a boon. 'I ask nothing,' answered Diogenes, 'but that thou get out of my sunshine.' "

RENE AUVILLE

Vallejo, Calif.

"Will" and "Shall"

SIR: R. M. Crosby [*SRL*, Nov. 24] seems to be very much concerned over finding two sentences in "the otherwise immaculate pages" of the *SRL* containing the expression "we will" and says that *shall* has become a "forgotten word."

The fact is that in spite of the dogmatism of certain writers of elementary grammars of the past generation, the arbitrary distinction between the usage of *shall* and *will* upon which Mr. Crosby bases his letter has never been firmly established. The rules were not formulated until the middle of the eighteenth century and were first given wide currency by Lindley Murray in 1795. They have never been followed with exactness by outstanding writers and speakers. Woodrow Wilson was but one of many educated and cultured Americans who completely disregarded them.

Dr. George Curme, one of the most eminent of American grammarians, believes that if the widespread use of *will* in all three persons should become finally established in our literary language it would be a gain to English expression. "Current English Usage," published by the National Council of Teachers of English, says: "The whole matter is at present surrounded by a cloud of uncertainty. The only thing about which there seems to be no doubt is that the hard and fast rules laid down by most rhetorics and handbooks are not to be relied on; probably what distinction ever has existed is gradually disappearing."

LEWIS H. CHRISMAN

Buckhannon, W. Va.

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TRADE Winds

THE LITERARY SCENE

●● In Roswell, New Mexico, a resident ordered some books from a catalogue of a Boston dealer, and was not amused to receive a reply that read, "Prices in our catalogue do not apply to orders on which customs duties must be paid." He answered: "I didn't realize that Massachusetts seceded too in 1936. I thought it was only Maine and Vermont. As for us, tourists started coming to New Mexico eighty years before the Pilgrims hit Plymouth."

●● In *The New York Times,* Charles Poore characterized Somerset Maugham as "the poor man's de Maupassant" and Louis Bromfield as "the poor man's Maugham."

●● In New Orleans, James Cain told a reporter that book critics were "simply weird in their ignorance, and often confuse themselves with God." He added hastily, "The confusion is unjustified."

●● In St. Petersburg, a local belle grew quite nasty when assured that Edgar Snow had never published a volume of collected poetry, returned later to apologize, "I meant Robert Frost."

●● In London, Liddell Hart, whose widely publicized military prognostications (see "The Defense of Britain") required a certain amount of modification, has taken to disserting on women's fashions. "Curves signify contentment," declares Mr. Hart, and points in proof to the tight waists and hoopskirts of the tranquil early eighteenth century. Gimbel's, advertising that they agree with Hart's theory, say that their new rayon crepes will give contentment to the women who wear them and the men they wear them for.

●● In St. Louis, a protracted newspaper strike affected only the business of the retail florists, who attributed the drop to the fact that people couldn't follow the usual death notices. Whaddya read?

●● In Oyster Bay, Nelson Doubleday sought to get rid of two workmen who had been doing a repair job in his house since May. "Are you fellows here to stay?" he asked caustically. "That's right," answered one workman. "I'm moving my mother-in-law in on Tuesday."

●● In a Village bookshop, avers *The New Yorker,* "What Makes Sammy Run" dominates the science section.

●● In a class of seventeen-year-olds in Ohio, Miss Geneva Stephenson passed out a collection of *Sateveposts, Lifes, Reader's Digests,* and *Ellery Queen Mystery Magazines,* and at the last moment included a few *SRLs.* Two days later a happy student reported, "We liked that *Saturday Review* best of all. We sure got a bunch of good addresses out of the back."

●● In Boston, the publishers of the Pollyanna books announce an eleventh "Glad Book" "to meet the special demands of a post-war world." They also point out that the other eleven titles have sold 950,000 copies in the past twenty months alone. Good God!

●● In New York, a hopeful author visited Harrison Smith to see what had happened to a manuscript he had submitted several months previous. Mr. Smith was cleaning his desk, and said while he continued his task, "I don't think your novel ever was brought to my attention." The author cried "That's it!" The absentminded Mr. Smith had just thrown the manuscript into the waste basket.

●● In Hollywood they have dug up a script writer who maintains a unique filing system. Rent bills are put away in a copy of Dickens's "Bleak House"; life insurance policies in "All This and Heaven Too"; auto licenses in "The Covered Wagon"; mining shares in "Great Expectations"; doctors' bills in "The Way of All Flesh"; gas and electricity receipts in "The Light That Failed." For a bill for his bride's new mink coat he rushed out to buy a copy of "The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife."

●● In Washington, a writer at work on a labor novel attended a meeting of striking street-car workers in search of material. There were not as many strikers present as he had expected, but he felt rewarded for coming when the chairman explained, "We'd have had a bigger attendance if the street cars had been running!"

●● In San Francisco, Joseph Henry Jackson invented a game that calls for place names that just fit the states in which they are located. Examples: Shapeless, Mass.; Oola, La.; Goodness, Me.; Income, Tex.; Deathly, Ill.; Hittor, Miss.; Praise, Ala.; Coco, Colo.; Proan, Conn.; Farmerina, Del. This could go on indefinitely.

SAMUEL HOPKINS ADAMS, author of the best-selling Woollcott biography, and now working on a new novel, took time out to inspect "The Manatee." He writes: "Having read with amusement your dissection of that pasteboard cetacean, Miss Nancy Bruff's 'Manatee,' may I add a word on its peculiarities as a historical document? The authoress presents what purports to be a picture of Nantucket in the 1840's. Her characters exclaim, 'Look who's here' and warn that 'he has it in for you.' One of them 'talks through her wig.' Another is a 'little scrapper.' An islander casually mentions dynamite—in the 1840's, mind you! Miss Bruff's use of such words as 'weird,' 'hectic' (which she might profitably look up in a contemporary dictionary) and 'intriguing' suggest a night club rather than a whaling port atmosphere.

"The Bruff Quakers are a singular crew. They address one another indiscriminately as 'you' and 'thee' (sometimes 'thou' when she chances to think of it) in one and the same passage. The daughter of the Quaker Folgers dresses in bright colors and goes to a ball (!), decolleté (!!) where her dance card (in 1840-something) is promptly filled. And these members of the Society of Friends repeatedly refer to themselves and their co-religionists as 'Quakers.' Has Miss Bruff never talked with a group of Friends?

"These are but samples of the absurdities with which the work abounds. There is hardly a page on which the locutions are not more suggestive of Times Square, 1945, than Nantucket, a century earlier. Miss Bruff's laudable ambition is 'to preserve the flavor of the island background.' Insofar as the flavor is fishy, she has succeeded." . . .

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"Quit worrying about the national debt . . . you can pass it on to *your* kids."

I THOUGHT I HAD heard all the good stories about George Gershwin and his father long ago, but Russel Crouse told two that were fresh as daisies at a dinner party last week. The whole Gershwin clan, plus a number of guests, gathered at a Belmore, New Jersey, cottage for a weekend many summers ago. George's father had a cocker who entered the dining-room at lunch time and looked imploringly at his master. Mr. Gershwin broke off a story he had been telling in his own patented brand of English and began speaking very rapidly in Yiddish to his wife. He explained later to the guests, "I had to speak Yiddish when I was begging mama to let the dog stay in the dining-room because I know he'd have been insulted if he could understand." . . . Later that winter, Crouse encountered Papa Gershwin at intermission-time of the premiere of "Girl Crazy." "Think it's going well?" asked Crouse. "Russel," the old gentleman assured him, "it's a smack!" . . .

BOB CONSIDINE WAS trying to explain to the waiter of a local chop-suey emporium a succulent dish he had sampled in Chungking. "I know it was a kind of duck," he said, "but at the same time it tasted like fish." "I know," said the waiter brightly. "*Hadduck!*" . . . Mary Roberts Rinehart confessed that she reread recently a murder novel she had written over fifteen years ago. "How did it stand up?" she was asked. "Well," she said frankly. "I swear I didn't guess the solution until I was two pages from the end." . . . Harper's publicity department got something of a shock when a voice announced over the phone, "I am an attorney named Stuart Little!" There was a slight pause, followed by, "But don't be frightened. I am not angry at E. B. White for writing the story of a mouse called Stuart Little. I just want you to tell him *I* am writing the story of a mouse named E. B. White." . . . Kurt Wolff, on his way to becoming as distinguished a publisher in America as he was in Europe before Hitler, is a friend of Paul Valery's. He once asked Valery, "Whom do you consider the greatest French writer of the nineteenth century?" Valery looked glum and answered, "Victor Hugo—alas!" . . . Valery also declared that evening, "A true writer never really finishes a book. He abandons it."

BENNETT CERF

"From where I sit"

If this column is peripatetic, that's because it's Christmas and—let's see, he has a cigarette case, he has neckties, and anyway, you can't choose clothes for other people—I know, I'll get him a coupla books.

Bennett Cerf says that I am quote disgustingly young unquote, and this probably accounts for my strong interest in books about children. Two such books are **The Door Opens** and **The West Window.** You may remember that I went overboard for **The West Window,** for its delicate analysis of child domination, and for what in the child would be nervous breakdown in the adult if you get what I mean. **The Door Opens** takes us back to the other side of child life; the side of warm rooms with magic snow outside, of moonbeams creeping across the floor, of the stabbing sadness of a pet canary's death forgotten in the present joy of buying Christmas presents. Both books touch with their wands the world of childhood which we tend to lose after we cease to be disgustingly young. These two books are in no sense duplicates, yet both are charming.

I also like **The Dreamers,** that novel about what happens to dreamers when they art put to the test of survival by J. BIGELOW CLARK and the Nazis. The book is well written, and creates an increasing tension relieved at just the right times by a fine sense of humor and the ridiculous.

I like GEORGE ANTHIEL'S **Bad Boy of Music,** and I find good testimony as to the composer's musical sincerity in the recent performance of his Fourth Symphony in New York by the energetic Erich Leinsdorf.

It won't be long before a lot of piscatorial enthusiasts will be spawning their time in water up to their knees, and maybe some of them would like to identify the one that got away. If so, **North American Game Fishes** by FRANCESCA LA MONTE will slip easily into the pocket.

Maybe you'd like to feel **At Home With Music** this Christmas. Or maybe it's your first Christmas home in four years and you just said, **Mom, I'm Home.**

Anyway—MEWWY CWYTHMUS.

paul

DOUBLEDAY, DORAN

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Seeing Things

THE PLAYWRIGHT'S LOT

ONE evening, late in the spring of 1937, Maxwell Anderson was backed against a wall of an upstairs room in the Hotel Algonquin. He was wearing what the innocent still quaintly refer to as a "tux." His brow was puckered; his dark hair just a touch tousled.

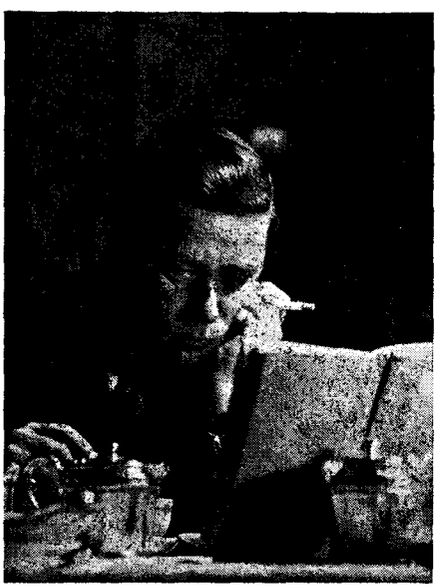
He glanced around him with an expression not unlike the one, I imagine, which would steal across the face of a tenderfoot if, after dark in the vast stretches of the West, he found himself alone and surrounded by coyotes. Plainly Mr. Anderson was on his guard. Plainly he was not among his kind. Plainly he had accepted the challenge of those forty-odd (from his point of view very odd) eyes which were focused expectantly upon him.

Mr. Anderson, may I quickly explain, was being feted at their annual dinner by the members of the New York Drama Critics Circle, those men and women who feast on reputations. For the second consecutive season a drama of his (that spring, "High Tor"; the spring before, "Winterset") had been voted the best play of the year by these same night prowlers. Mr. Anderson had cleared his throat. He was preparing to make his speech of acceptance. Reading from a manuscript, he began to describe to those before him, more versed as they were in the art of "giving it" than of "taking it," what is required to be a playwright.

"Of all the workers in the theatre," said he, "the playwright is most in need of a durable and resilient physique. The mind and body of a playwright who is to live long should be composed entirely of vulcanized rubber, his outer integument should be chain mail or horsehide, and he must thrive on a diet of cold steel and poison. Time after time, even with this equipment, he will find himself stuck with knives from every direction, like the cork in a hardware window. The only reason he does not die when, on these occasions, he drinks cyanide in his lonely retreat, is because he is used to cyanide and has been drinking it for years. . . . He must be born with a complete incapacity to feel pain. Otherwise, he will go mad, or die young and go to Hollywood."

This austere picture of the playwright's lot, though true, is apparently only one side of the canvas. If it were not, our good dramatists would be even scarcer than they are. The other—the brighter side, the side that cajoles and beckons—is the one about which John van Druten writes in his new comedy, "The Mermaids Singing."*

That as a picture this unseamy side is not without its basis in truth, Mr. van Druten's own case proves. Like every playwright, and not only those serious dramatists who believe in their "priesthood" and the theatre's high "destiny," Mr. van Druten has had to swig his occasional draughts of cyanide. Yet he is a preeminently successful practitioner of a profession as rich in hazards as it is in profits. Any man who, in his fashion, has three plays running simultaneously on Broadway, especially when two of these have proved such sturdy tenants as "The Voice of the Turtle" and "I Remember Mama," can scarcely be said to earn inclusion among what *The New York Times* each Yuletide refers to as "The Hundred Neediest Cases."



— *Jay Leyda*

"In an age that has proved itself tragically uncivilized, John van Druten's continues to be a highly civilized talent."

Mr. van Druten was twenty-four when, as the author of "Young Woodley," he first came to this country to sip almost prenatally the champagne of success. Since then, although he has been human enough to know his box-office failures, such as "Diversion," "After All," "Behold We Live," and "Flowers of the Forest," he has also enjoyed in "The Distaff Side," "Old Acquaintance," and most especially "There's Always Juliet," his more than average number of hits.

It is on a note of professional triumph that Mr. van Druten writes "The Mermaids Singing." His new comedy is autobiographical not in its facts but in its feeling. It is the story of what might happen to a playwright, as successful as Mr. van Druten, if he were married and happened to be on the road without his wife while trying out a play as unconventional in its morals as "The Voice of the Turtle."

I doubt if anyone has ever made the playwright's role seem more enviable than Mr. van Druten makes it. He sings its praises with a recruiting officer's zeal. He glorifies it the way, once upon a time, Mr. Ziegfeld was wont to glorify the American girl. He makes all poor males out front, who have been foolish enough to be doctors, lawyers, merchants, chiefs, regret that they, too, did not walk in Shakespeare's or Ivor Novello's footsteps.

The dramatist in Mr. van Druten's play is middle-aged. One gathers he is as irresistible as Lou Tellegen; as rich as Rockefeller; as sophisticated as Noel Coward; as handsome as Gary Cooper; and as capable of "sending" the bobby-sock brigade as Frank Sinatra. Waiters hover about him like tugs around a liner. When on tour he occupies the kind of hotel suite usually identified as Presidential. His fame races ahead of him like an outrider. He has only to walk into the bar of a hotel, pleasantly reminiscent of the Ritz in Boston, to cause women of all ages from the Newtons to swoon.

He is a happy man domestically, this playwright, even if he has an itinerant eye. He loves his wife and has been faithful to her. He has also been unfaithful. Though always there, like the stock market, his fidelity fluctuates in the stock market manner. His impulses might be more secure if only he were younger. But, like Mr. Lewis's Cass Timberlane, Mr. van Druten's dramatist rejoices in the temptations of the dangerous age.

He is the first glamor boy from the Dramatists' Guild ever to have been

*THE MERMAIDS SINGING, a play by John van Druten. Presented by Alfred de Liagre, Jr. Staged by Mr. van Druten. Settings by Raymond Sovey. With Walter Abel, Beatrice Pearson, Frieda Inescort, Lois Wilson. At the Empire Theatre.

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seen by Mr. van Druten's heroine. She is a heart-strong young girl. Although engaged to a naval officer of her own vintage, she forgets her ensign almost the minute her beckoning eyes fall upon the playwright. He may be undecided, but he is not unresponsive. For seven scenes he and the girl waver. They debate whether they will or they won't. Finally, out of sheer desperation and a natural desire to have something happen, one begins to hope they will. But they don't.

If Mr. van Druten's new comedy does not prove as successful as a comedy as its central figure is supposed to be as a playwright, doubtless it is because "The Mermaids Singing" is a story of lovers who do nothing except talk. Under such circumstances words—even Mr. van Druten's words—fail after a time. The spectator is bound to become frustrated.

Mr. van Druten is a dramatist who cannot write a play without some merits. In an age that has proved itself tragically uncivilized, his continues to be a highly civilized talent. He is a craftsman who enjoys the challenges of his medium. He is at his best when working as a miniatur-

ANSWERS TO LITERARY QUIZ

1. Organ, from "Il Penseroso," by Milton.
2. Trumpets, from "The Coming of Arthur," by Tennyson.
3. Banjo, from "Mandalay," by Kipling.
4. Drum, fife, from "Up at a Villa," by Robert Browning.
5. Dulcimer, from "Kubla Khan," by Coleridge.
6. Drum, from "The Rubaiyat," by Edward Fitzgerald.
7. Fiddle, from "Juggling Jerry," by George Meredith.
8. Lyres, from "The Darkling Thrush," by Thomas Hardy.
9. Citherns, citoles, from "The Blessed Damozel," by D. G. Rossetti.
10. Lute, from "The Eve of St. Agnes," by Keats.
11. Drum, from "Childe Harold," by Byron.
12. Barrel organ, from "The Barrel Organ," by Alfred Noyes.
13. Clarion, fife, from "Old Mortality," by Scott.
14. Violins, from "A Song for St. Cecelia's Day," by Dryden.
15. Bugle, from "The Lady of Shalott," by Tennyson.
16. Lyre, from "Ode to the West Wind," by Shelley.
17. Bassoon, from "The Ancient Mariner," by Coleridge.
18. Harp, from "Mater Triumphalis," by Swinburne.
19. Pipe, pipe, from "Songs of Innocence," by William Blake.
20. Bell, from "The Blue Closet," by William Morris.

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by JOHN VAN DRUTEN
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ist. His perceptions are charming. He understands the human significance of the smallest values.

Since the theatre provides his background for "The Mermaids Singing," Mr. van Druten can be said to be taking something of a busman's holiday. Obviously he is writing from his heart. He knows and loves the stage as few men do. The comments he makes on his playwright are illuminating. He does more than present the outward comforts of a successful dramatist. He also captures his inner anxieties.

He faces the special problem age can present to a writer. He knows the mere fact that a man is in his middle years may mean he is removed from a first-hand knowledge of the young, and of the idioms both of their tongues and hearts. He is aware that fame and success do not come without attendant penalties. They can be isolating forces. They can exile a playwright from the everyday experiences of his audiences. They can confine him in a world as cushioned as it is dangerous.

Mr. van Druten does not survey success as Mr. Coward did in "Design for Living" and find it empty. His approach to his subject, characteristically enough, is tender rather than disillusioned. He wears his sophistication lightly. His wit is gentle. His audacities have a way of remaining respectable. He talks of passion in crumpet tones. He remains somewhat Victorian in tone even when in word he is the champion of the unlost weekend.

Mr. van Druten has, and provides, his incidental fun while advancing (more accurately, padding) his love story. He writes with insight about the professional and amorous disappointments of a second-rate actress. In the person of a stage-struck and surly young G.I., who is interested only in the drama of social significance, he sketches a diverting minor character. He has his over-easy stock-company laughs, too, at the expense of bores encountered on the road.

But for me, at least, Mr. van Druten's new play runs downhill with ever-growing speed after its introductory act. This act, by the way, includes a scene written in his best manner. It comes when the playwright and the actress, as middle-aged people, are discussing in glistening terms the wonders of being young, of tasting life with palates unsurfeited, of finding joy merely in the weather, of feeling the thrill of meeting one's first celebrity.

Alfred de Liagre, with handsome aid from the settings of Raymond Sovey, has produced "The Mermaids Singing" as if it were every bit as worthwhile as Mr. van Druten, his players, and his audiences would have liked it to be. Beatrice Pearson is beguiling as the young girl, and Lois Wilson admirable as the actress few people remember. Although as the playwright Walter Abel fails to do what the late Leslie Howard, for example, might have done with the part, he nonetheless succeeds in giving a warm and likable performance.

If this time cyanide must be Mr. van Druten's drink, this will not surprise him. Like Mr. Anderson, he is too experienced and successful a dramatist not to know that, when critics turn barkeepers and pass cyanide, they mistake it for a stimulant.

JOHN MASON BROWN

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By Charles Edward Eaton

WATCHING the richness of the hills, the purple quaresma in flower,
I know again how young is nature, being old
Without memory. This is the essence of the hills, that they hold
Within themselves, exact and pure, the shape and character of the hour.

So time which is the sunlight moving in a flood
Does not catch upon a flaw, but is the sheen of every flower and leaf,
And I, being wise, will stand in the heart of this belief
And contemplate the light through flesh and blood.

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STORIES FROM FAR AND NEAR. By Lion Feuchtwanger. New York: The Viking Press. 1945. 180 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by F. C. WEISKOPF

BALZAC once said that every author of big novels or classical tragedies indulges, every now and then, in writing poetry or short stories of a kind strikingly different from his usual production. While reading Mr. Feuchtwanger's volume of stories one is constantly reminded of that Balzacian observation. The author of "Power," "Success," "Paris Gazette," and other big novels distinguished by their elaborate plots, presents us here with a very different kind of fabulation. In a short prefatory note, Mr. Feuchtwanger himself gives a perfect characterization of his stories as being "various in form and content" but all "animated by a common purpose: to seize on that particular aspect of a subject—be it a personality or the tendency of a period—which permits of an over-all survey; to observe it at the moment which the great German critic Lessing terms "the instant of fruition." Therefore, Mr. Feuchtwanger warns the reader not to expect his stories to be "short stories in the Anglo-Saxon sense, for none aims primarily at relating an anecdote, which is the chief function of the Anglo-Saxon short story, according to Henry James, eminent American author of Continental short stories."

Yet in spite of the lack of an "anecdotal motor" and often even of a plot at all, Mr. Feuchtwanger's stories from far and near (from Bavaria, Texas, India, or the North Pole, and from the days of Emperor Nero to the time of World War II) succeed in capturing the interest and firing the imagination of the reader. This effect is achieved by two outstanding literary qualities. First, Mr. Feuchtwanger proves to be a master of the art of character portrayal even with the scantiest means, and secondly he has a gift for saturating every little story with his rich knowledge of history and human life. He puts, so to speak, little windows into his stories —little windows permitting vistas into vaster worlds than those actually dealt with in the narrative. Thus, "Marianne in India," while telling the eternal story of a big man attracted by a rather mediocre woman, gives us the whole atmosphere of a journey to India at the time of the conquest of that fabulous land by the East India Company. The seemingly unpretentious tale of Mr. Wollstein's trunk

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A review of "Stories from Far and Near" would not be complete without a mention of Mr. Feuchtwanger's sly humor and ironic wisdom—part of that great old Bavarian tradition which has added to German literature and art the "heavenly spark of laughter" so badly needed and so often missing.

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Beale Streetana

MEMPHIS BRAGABOUTS. Amazing Characters I Have Met. By Eldon Roark. New York: Whittlesey House. 1945. 224 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by THOMAS SUGRUE

MEMPHIS sits on the Chickasaw Bluffs, looking down on the Mississippi River and out over Arkansas, with the state of Mississippi close enough for courting and trade. It is, then, as Eldon Roark says, the capital for a large section of three states, besides being one of the few cities in America with a distinctive personality and a sense of living beyond commerce, corporations, and community uplift. It contains, among other things, Beale Street, one of the nation's most famous thoroughfares. It also welcomes and houses, from time to time, some of the most curious and entertaining folk in our population, including Herbert E. Mann, who lifts bulls. Mr. Roark, who is a columnist on the *Memphis Press-Scimitar,* has made such characters his specialty, and now he has put

them in a book. Anyone who has lived in a Southern city or county seat will recognize many of them as typical; others are the sort not usually seen anywhere. All of them are offshoots of the unpredictable experiment nature persists in trying, of putting a restless ego in a common and undistinguished physical mechanism.

Beale Street is given an entertaining and instructive chapter in the book. There is another about the floods, a touching story of the scrubwoman who set out to row down the Mississippi in order to rest her back, profiles of Memphis eccentrics, anecdotes and legends of the city and the river, and a good-natured piece about the surviving veterans of the Confederacy which indicates how tender modern Southerners feel toward these doughty old warriors, yet how realistically they regard their now very tremendous deeds of valor. An amusing little book, about curious but nice people, it will tell you more about the South than a dozen novels about Marse Henry and the old plantation.

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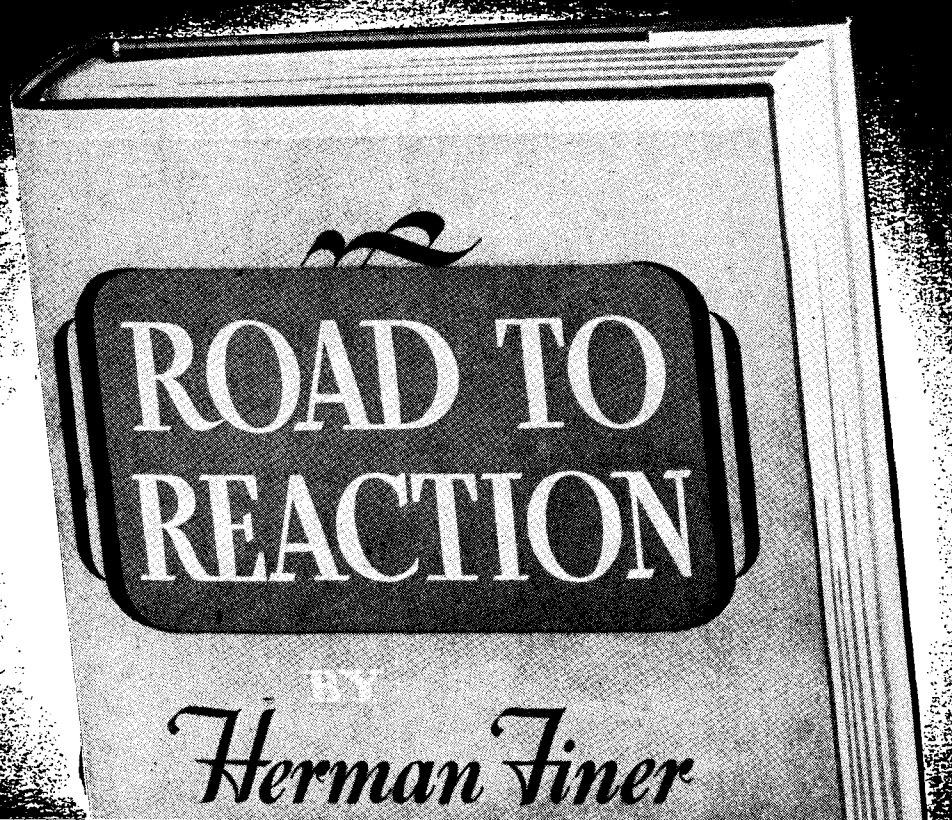
The book to give your relatives and friends who insisted on your reading Hayek's *Road to Serfdom*



In "this brilliant and persuasive volume" (so described by Seymour Harris in the *New York Times Book Review)* a world-renowned political scientist offers "a sizzling refutation of Friedrich Hayek's *Road to Serfdom." (New Yorker).* He provides—to quote the author's preface—crushing evidence that

> "Hayek's apparatus of learning is deficient, his reading incomplete, his understanding of the economic process bigoted, his account of history false, his political science is almost nonexistent, his terminology misleading, his comprehension of British and American political procedure and mentality grossly defective; and his attitude to average women and men is truculently authoritarian."

ROAD TO REACTION is "a valuable and expert rating of one of the weirdest phenomena of obscurantism in modern times . . . breathes the democratic spirit of confidence and contains a progressive program based upon hope rather than upon fear."—Charles E. Merriam, *Chicago Sun*

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In the Slaves' Own Words

LAY MY BURDEN DOWN. A Folk History of Slavery. Edited by B. A. Botkin. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1945. 286 *pp.* $3.50.

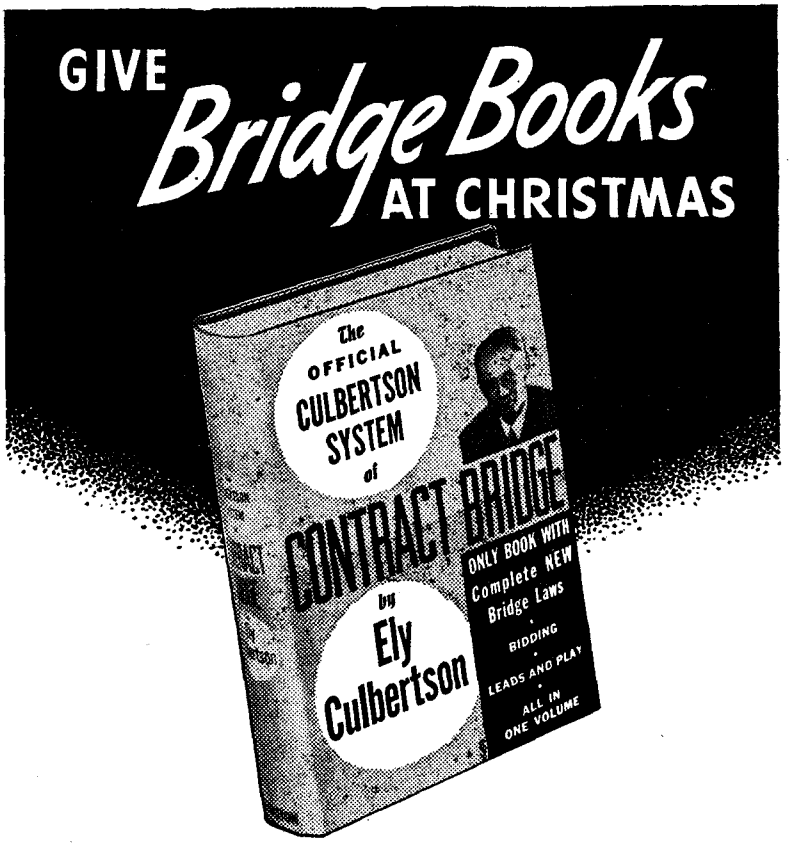
Reviewed by HENRY CHRISTMAN

IN the Library of Congress are seventeen volumes made up from 10,000 typescript pages based on more than 2,000 interviews with former slaves, most of whom probably are now dead, by members of the Federal Writers' Project. B. A. Botkin, who supervised preparation of the Slave Narrative Collection, was asked to make a selection from the interviews "which would give at once the flavor of the entire collection and the social pattern revealed in the series." The result is "Lay My Burden Down," a folk history of slavery in which through some 280 anecdotes, tales, and autobiographical narratives former slaves tell what slavery and emancipation meant to them. The experiences, philosophy, and folklore of this group of old people (ages of those interviewed ranged from seventy-five to 105) looking back on a life lived part slave and part free become under skilful editorial integration illuminating social history and permanent literature.

"Lay My Burden Down" richly reflects the mores of the Negro community. Here are people—old and wise—talking over their lives, the little incidents—sights and sounds, tastes and smells—and the larger recollections of the feeling of living in slavery, being sold at public auction, being selected to breed more Negroes for slavery, of working from can to can't ("They worked . . . from can to can't, from the time they could see until they couldn't"). Here, to use Mr. Botkin's words, is the "unaffected sincerity of honest folk plus the reticence of those whom cruelty has made wary and oppression has taught the art of evasion and irony as a compromise between submission and revolt." The collection abounds in vivid sayings ("Mean a man as God ever wattled a gut in") and funny stories; canny, shrewd, and humorous talk that is often bitter but always proud. And there is evasiveness bred of necessity: "I used to go over to Massa Daniels's plantation . . . The folks over there they used to say to me: 'Who's your pappy? Who's your pappy?' I just say: 'Turkey buzzards lay me and the sun hatch me.' . . . Course all the time they know, and I knows, too, that Massa Daniels was my pappy." People talking have a way of coloring talk for effect, and as a result these slave narratives become, as Mr. Botkin explains, "a kind of legendary history . . . which furnishes unconscious evidence for the historian and the student of culture." The interviews, as a whole, show a pattern of consistency that certainly is truth.

No one who reads the slaves' own autobiographical stories, especially the longer full-length narratives in Section II, can fail to have a better understanding of the race problem. Here "the master appears as the victim of his own system," as Mr. Botkin says. In a world "torn by fear, passion and violence, all classes were inevitably demoralized and brutalized." And as a result "the tragic beginnings of what was most degrading of all—slavery's legacy of race prejudice and hatred." The slaves, in their oral reports, recreate the actual conditions of slavery with no attempt to gloss over its physical and mental degradation. There is nothing here of the romantic conception of plantation tradition created out of sentimental distortions. The Negro did not like slavery.

> We prays for the end of tribulation and the end of beatings and for shoes that fit our feet . . . What I hated most was when they'd beat me and I didn't know what they beat me for, and I hated them stripping me naked as the day I was born.
>
> I's ready to see God, but I hope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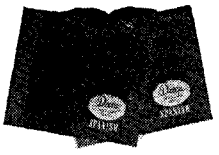

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my old massa ain't there to torment me again.

He had a big stump where he made the niggers stand while they were being sold, and the men and boys had to strip off to the waist to show their muscle and iffen they had any scars or hurt places. . . . The white men come up and look into the slave's mouth just like he was a mule or a horse.

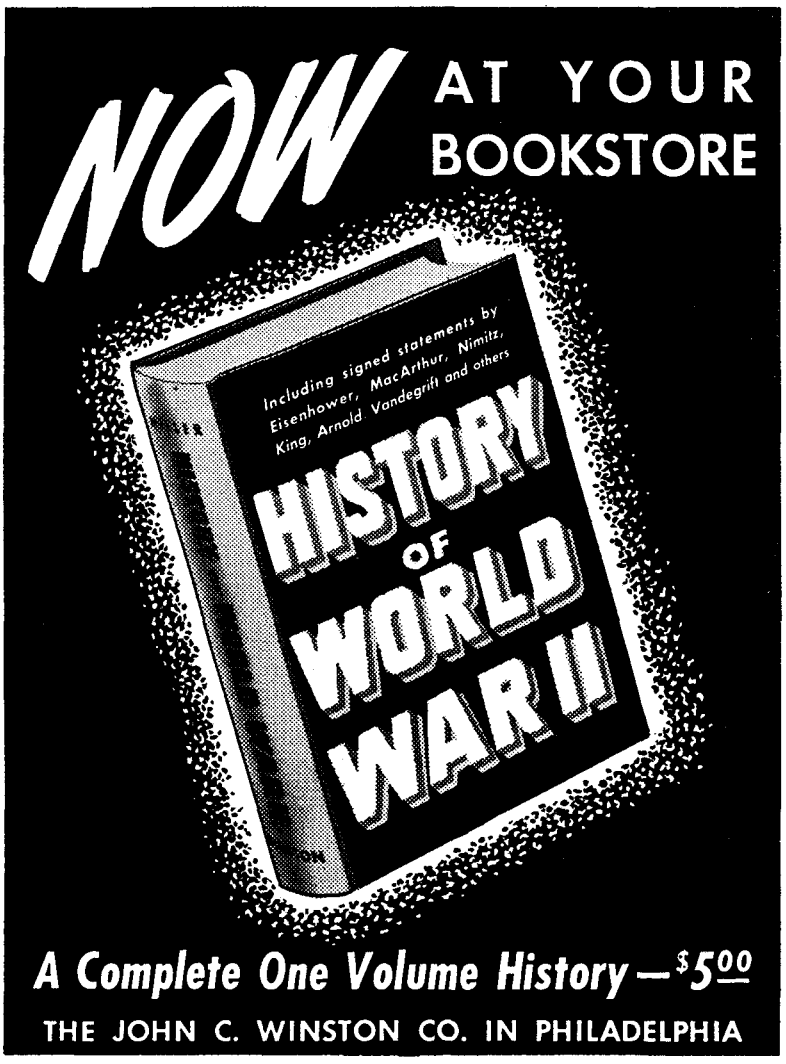
And there are stories of slaves being tied to trees, arms and legs around the trunk, whipped into unconsciousness and then left tied all night.

> Slavery was the worst days ever seed in the world . . . I got the scars on my body to show to this day . . . I seed them put the men and women in the stock with they hands screwed down through holes in the board and they feets tied together and their naked behinds to the world. Solomon the overseer beat them with a big whip and Massa looked on . . . They cut the flesh most to the bones, and some they was when they take them out of stock and put them in the beds, they never get up again.

There may be difference in the degree of torture, brutality, and degradation, but Nazi brutality seems to have had something of a parallel in America. And like the Nazi, the plantation owner in the end became the victim of his system.

When news of freedom came to the slave few of them had understanding of its real meaning. It was a strange haunting word completely out of their experience. "And I say: 'What is free?' I was looking for a man to come. The master came down to the cotton field: 'I hates to tell you . . . you is free.' . . . We didn't hardly know what he means. We just sort of huddled around together like scared rabbits . . . " Emancipation did not mean equality or even freedom. It did not take the Negro long to learn this. Released from bondage, they started on the move. "They seemed to want to get close to freedom, so they know what it was—like it was a place or a city." They never seemed to find it—and "the young folks is still hunting a better place and more freedom." They found that "freedom could make folks proud, but it didn't make 'em rich." Or "it seems like the white people can't get over us being free, and they do everything to hold us down all the time." With uncommon understanding, the Negro says: "The first war was about freedom and the war right after it was equalization." That war still goes on.

Mr. Botkin, with the aid of the much-maligned Federal Writers' Project, has produced a major contribution to the social history and literary heritage of America.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TUK GLSI, TUK JXOPI, TUK VIIX, TUK ALZA, POT QIIX SB UDT ODOB WKUS SI.

MUAT HFKKUFZAJ—DOLGLTZ.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 129

MANY A MAN WHO THINKS TO FOUND A HOME DISCOVERS THAT HE HAS MERELY OPENED A TAVERN FOR HIS FRIENDS.

—NORMAN DOUGLAS.
—South Wind

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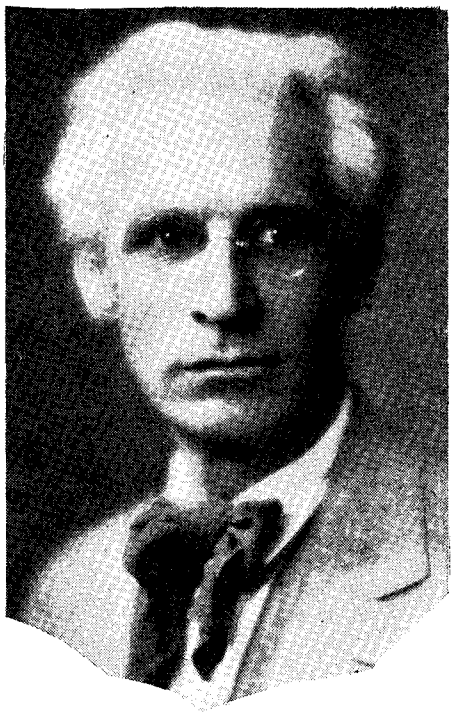

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Sonnet 51

I do believe these poems encompass more
In brave, fair honesty of love-report
Than ever artist dared, tried, did before,
Whether in country-side, or bower, or court;
For Life that's been so hard on me gives this:
At fifty-seven still youth enough to feel,
With practiced vigor of analysis,
And speech to match bold insight in the real.
Touching this last: a man at fifty-seven,
Like me who's watched so long each coward neighbor
Live with blurred eyeballs in a tinsel heaven,
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Decay of Musical Life in Germany

HERITAGE OF FIRE. By Friedelind Wagner and Page Cooper. New York: Harper & Bros. 1945. 225 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by THEODORE M. PURDY

FRIEDELIND Wagner is a granddaughter of Richard Wagner, and as both jacket and content of her book demonstrate, she takes after the old man. She and her fancifully named sister and brothers, Verena, Wieland, and Wolfgang, were brought up as befitted scions of the ruling house of the kingdom of Bayreuth.

Her father Siegfried, though a dismal failure as a composer, and her beautiful English-born mother had succeeded in restoring the prestige of the music festivals after the First World War—always under the aegis of the legendary Cosima, widow of the great Richard and daughter of Franz Liszt. Crises and depressions might come and go, and fashions in singers and staging might change, but the Wagnerian tradition must go on, and in two out of every three years Haus Wahnfried opened its portals to the musical great. It was a romantic and unreal world in many ways, and one ripe and ready to receive the Nazi poison.

From her daughter's book Winifred Wagner emerges as the agent who deliberately changed the character of the festival and delivered it to the Nazis for propaganda purposes. Winifred has always been an enigmatic figure. An orphan adopted by the pianist Klindworth and brought up in Germany, she not only embraced German habits and ways of thought but lived to become one of Adolf Hitler's earliest and most enthusiastic supporters. She was faithful through the years of imprisonment and reaped her reward after the Nazis came to power in 1934. By that time Siegfried Wagner was dead, and his still youthful widow was often mentioned for the dizzy heights which Eva Braun is supposed to have attained only amid the ruins of Berlin.

The authors describe in revealing detail the first visits of the diffident Hitler to Bayreuth, and Winifred's almost schoolgirlish *schwarm* for him. Later "Wolf" (as he was known to the children) came often to Bayreuth and gradually his spirit and doctrine came to dominate the place. The Wagnerian mythos had given way to the Hitlerian, in many ways akin. Friedelind tells how the singers and musicians divided into camps, and how Toscanini withdrew when the Fuehrer's official visits turned the cycle into a Party festival second only to that at Nuremberg.

We have had a good many books purporting to give intimate details of the lives of Hitler and his minions, but few as authentic as this. For the Wagners were for a time in high favor. After accepting privileges and honors for years, the author as a result of her quarrels with her mother decided to leave Germany, however. (She seems always to have been a problem child, and proud of it.) By way of Switzerland she made her way to South America in 1941, and there Toscanini befriended her and enabled her to come to this country.

She and Miss Cooper tell the story fluently, though at times without a full understanding of its implications. Friedelind's own personality is not entirely sympathetic, but the book is of value and interest nevertheless. With the possible exception of Dr. Geissmar's memoirs, no recent book has given so good a picture of the decay of musical life in Germany under the Nazis. And Bayreuth was in its way an epitome of the German mind and spirit, which can produce both "Die Meistersinger" and the incredible ugliness of Haus Wahnfried.

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Poet, Dreamer

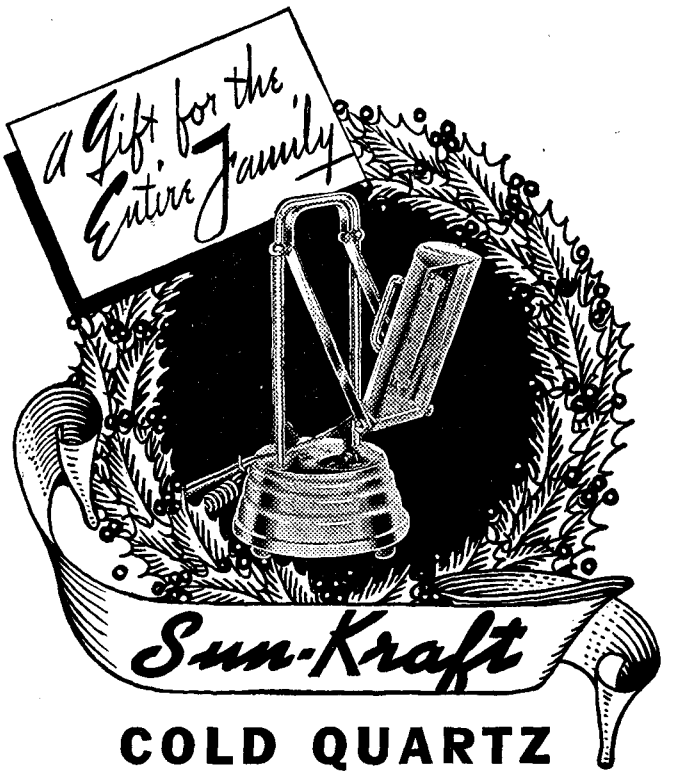
PLOUGHMAN OF THE MOON. The Autobiography of Robert W. Service. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1945. 472 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by NATHAN L. ROTHMAN

SOMEWHERE early in his autobiography Mr. Service calls it "the record of a dreamer," and many times he makes the same sort of reference to himself, as Service the poet and dreamer. But we need not mistake what he means by a dreamer, or a poet, any more than he does. The most patent thing about him is his transparent honesty. His are the simple annals of a poor Scotch boy who dreamt of freedom and security for himself, and went about getting these things with as much realism and dispatch as possible. He is a kinsman of Robert Burns, but he never thought he could write that kind of poetry, or any other kind that was "arty." Poetry, as a matter of fact, came later, although he did write his first jingle at the age of six. First there were struggles with the more accredited methods of reaching security—a berth in an office, later a bank, study at the University of Edinburgh, ranching. But these were confining things. They meant regime, routine, work. Robert Service wanted out, and the key came to his hand with the sudden success

of some of his easy jingles about Yukon life. Well, so that's what does it!

He set to work turning them out methodically and without benefit of inspiration. Service was the Trollope of light verse, always, we must note again, consciously honest about it. His chapter on "The Poetic Urge" establishes his complete freedom from it; to prove this he quotes the effect of the Christmas season upon his music: "My belly's got a bulge with Christmas cheer. . . ." Service is, indeed, as free from literary or social influence as any man can be in our times. He had some experiences, hard and seamy, common to some of our poets and realists. He was in California when it was rich in talent and urgency, and hobnobbed with Frank Norris, Jack London, George Sterling, Ambrose Bierce. But they didn't touch him. Nothing did but his private dream, and from it he hatched the arid tragedies of a lady known as Lou, a gent called Dan McGrew, of Lasca, and Fleurette. I suppose youngsters in school will go on memorizing them, as we all did, until they learn better.



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A Special World

WE ARE THE WOUNDED. By Keith Wheeler. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1945. 224 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by ALBERT Q. MAISEL

WAR CORRESPONDENTS — the honest ones—know that though we may land with the first wave, we cannot ourselves experience most of the stresses of battle. We can only decipher and interpret, with as much insight as is given to us, the true feelings of the man with a gun in his hands.

Keith Wheeler, however, is different. He is one of the small band of correspondents who stopped a bullet and lived to write about it. The mere chance of a sniper's choice of target, on Iwo Jima, carried him across a barrier otherwise inherent to his trade and introduced him to a side of war usually covered more with sympathy and sentiment than with understanding.

> In war [he now writes] one lives with the unbroken living and the dead. One sees little of the wounded, except to see them hit and carried away. I became one of the bloody and silent burdens on the stretchers and thereafter I entered and lived in the special world of the wounded.

Out of this experience has come a good book and a true one. Wheeler writes about things that have been told many times before, but he writes, as it were, from the *inside*. He tells of the fear that precedes battle, "the cumulative, corrosive fear that stays with you each time you are afraid and makes each action a little worse than the last." He details every sensation of his experience, from the unbelievable violence of the first blow, through all the hours of waiting pinned to the beach, through the days on a hospital ship and months in wards, to the moment of final discharge. He observes the men who lie beside him with new eyes. He sees the nurses, wardboys, doctors, and medal-pinning generals from the worm's-eye view of the bedfast.

The sum of his experience with the burned, the broken, and the "batty" constitutes just about as terrible an indictment of war as can be written—an indictment all the more effective because Wheeler preaches no sermons. For here, with the heightening emphasis of understatement, we see the price of war being paid, in agonizing instalments and in the grim, anticipative groping of the blind and limbless to find and figure out their place in a strange and perpetually

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restricted world. It makes unpleasant reading for the horror-conditioned, the escapist and the war-bored, the sort of reading one would like to inflict, for their present and future sins, upon all those who talk or write far too glibly about throwing our weight around with our new, atomic, preponderance of power. The wraiths who haunt Wheeler's wards had new weapons too. The advantage and the percentage were all on their side.

Wheeler does not labor his point. Through all but the last few pages, the message comes through almost in spite of the author. Only in his last paragraph does he pitch over the real stinger, a bullseye for the incurably obtuse, when he writes:

> The ebb tide of the Second World War is likely to leave bitter cripples selling apples and shoestrings and resentful blind men behind news counters. There may be those who will make a grim appraisal of the society for which they gave much of their lives, *and they may find it wanting.*

With V-E and V-J Days fast receding into history, I fear that Wheeler's book will achieve all too little serious reading. It should be given, as required reading, to all among us who are abdicating our futures to the wielders of atom-backed power and the promoters of bigger and better world wars. Perhaps, for them, it will require a new sub-title. Call it, "An Introduction to Political Economy and International Relations."

Only Skin-Deep

NEW DIRECTIONS IN PSYCHOLOGY. By Samuel Lowy, M.D. New York: Emerson Books, Inc. 194 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by BERTRAM D. LEWIN, M.D.

THIS book belies its name, unless a direction already thirty years old can be called new. The psychology presented in this book is that two-dimensional version of Freud's views, or that skin-deep application of Freud's concepts, which was popularized many years ago by W. Stekel. The case reports are mere anecdotes. Many sober sounding suggestions are made as to what society should do to make the individual happy and unneurotic. The sociology like the psychology is superficial. One idea, that a body called the State should take over all responsibility for the training of citizens, back in infancy even, excites the astonishment of Prof. Herbert Read (formerly of Edinburgh) who contributes the preface.

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Clues from the CRIME CLUB

IF YOU should happen to pick up a copy of any of the books by *C. and G. Little* or by *George Bagby*, you won't have to do any page-flipping to find out that they mix humor with homicide, and that leaning heavily on character and atmosphere for effect. For there, on the spine of the jacket, are the two symbols which identify this type of mystery: a grinning skull, and a small but sinister black hand.

A similar black hand on the jacket of *Death, My Darling Daughters*, by *Jonathan Stagge*, also promises character and atmosphere (fulfilling the promise, apparently, for Will Cuppy calls it "Active entertainment that seldom flags.")

The above-mentioned symbols are but two of the seven which help you "type" each Crime Club mystery at a glance—a happy inspiration born about two years ago, and still paying dividends in popularity and sales.

Everyone, we reasoned, forms a picture in his mind when he thinks of a certain kind of story; a hansom cab, perhaps, if it's Conan Doyle, and surely a clammy dungeon or ruined mansion if it's Poe. It was just a short step from there to imagine what symbols would place more modern writers.

Anyone who has ever read *Manning Coles'* thrillers would certainly agree that an eye, secretive yet penetrating, gives the distilled, pictorial essence of these stories of spies and sabotage. And an eye it is, on the jacket, for every story by any author employing this suspenseful motif.

On the other hand, the devious and well-plotted intricacies of *H. C. Bailey* and similar masters of deduction suggests nothing so much as a chess puzzle, and devotees of this kind of mystery can take their cue, or their clue, from the chess knight on the book cover.

The "tough guy" story seems to call for that very thing, and you'll find a square cigar-smoking jaw under a tilted fedora wherever you can find a Crime Club jacket enfolding a tale of hard-boiled villainy and aggressive detection.

Fast action, of course, doesn't always imply a tough guy because, for one thing, some of our best fictional sleuths (and criminals) are quick on the draw while retaining a suavity worthy of Lord Chesterfield. Also, the bad guy and the good guy are sometimes not guys at all, but gals. Whatever the sex involved, you'll find that our fast action stories are symbolized by a neatly barking revolver.

This symbol is a frankly intriguing one, for it suggests neither the flavor nor the theme, beyond the fact that it is something new. So look for the exclamation point when you want a mystery that departs in theme, characterization or development from all others.

There you have them—the seven symbols employed by the Crime Club to take the mystery out of selecting the one you want to read.

The Gunman

Some New Verse

LIKE THE ROOT. By George Zabriskie. New York: Coward-McCann. 1945. 77 *pp.* $2.

LAND OF UNLIKENESS. By Robert Lowell. Cummington, Mass.: The Cummington Press. 1944. *Unpaged.* $3.

THAT'S ALL THAT MATTERS. By Oscar Williams. New York: Creative Age Press. 1945. 95 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by DUDLEY FITTS

THE first two of these books are a valuable contribution to the exceedingly small body of contemporary verse that deserves respect; the third is the dull daily foil that sets them off. All have their importance: Mr. Zabriskie's, the importance of nearly flawless control, the fulfilled integration of matter and manner; Mr. Lowell's, the importance of indignant devotion stated in terms of what I can call only contrived eccentricity; Mr. Williams's, the sad importance of the

negative model—*Go thou and do otherwise.*

"Like the Root" is a philosophical poem, fairly Wordsworthian in its natural symbolism. It is a didactic rhapsody—the terms are not mutually exclusive—and it runs the risks of its intention: that is to say, its expository success depends to an unusual extent upon the awareness and the receptiveness of the reader. Four thoughtful readings of it have not persuaded me that the theme is of particular moment. Reduced to a flat statement it would seem spare enough—as would "Tintern Abbey." But each reading has increased my appreciation of the texture of the poem, the immediacy of idea made image. The writing is not merely sensuous, it is tactile: the lines are like living things upon the page: "Dream the leaf down, then; descend, descend, / no more the forest seen green from a green / hill green waves of trees waving over / the still slowness of the green river," for instance, which is not merely description but, so far as words can become it, the thing itself. And I would call

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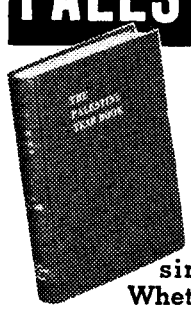

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attention to the masterly spacing, in that green sea, of the darker o's and a's. This is poetry of careful beauty.

There is nothing careful, at first sight, about Mr. Lowell's poems. They writhe, they pound, they grimace; 'The lunchers stop to spit into Christ's eye' (but, after all, they really do); Our Lady is a Celestial Hoyden whom 'if soldiers mind you well / They shall find you are their belle / And belly too'; the Holy Cross is apostrophized as 'Cold Comfort.'" One is irresistibly reminded of another Bostonian whose Catholicism (though his was Anglican, not Roman) struck alarmingly unconventional attitudes in fine verse —the late John Wheelwright. Adapting a raucous schoolboy oath—Great bandylegged &c jumping Jesus!—, he began a poem about Christ and the modern money-changers with the line, "Jump, Jesus! Jump. Up, do not stand for it!" The point is, that he was perfectly sincere; and consequently perfectly successful. Similarly, as one weighs the violent mannerisms of Mr. Lowell, one concludes that they are not mere caperings, but tropes as carefully contrived, at their best, as any of Mr. Zabriskie's; more compelling than his, too, because more urgently fashioned; running more risks than his, failing more often, but daring infinitely more. It is not necessary to go back to Crashaw to explain Mr. Lowell, although he has certainly read Crashaw well; nor to Hopkins, although the Jesuit poet speaks here too. What we have is the tough-headed, normally Unitarian (or, at its gaudiest, Congregationalist) New England "character" turned Catholic: a young Emerson at High Mass in Appleton Chapel. He is full of *saeva indignatio*—too impatient, indeed, to give correctly the name of the famous former rector of Trinity: he calls him *Kingsolving*, and bishops blush on their thrones!—, but the indignation is good for us, if we will only heed it. Meanwhile, it makes excellent poetry.

After such pleasures it seems a pity to exhibit the nakedness of Mr. Williams. He has changed from the days when That Man Was Coming at You —changed in the direction of more quiet, a direction which he would do well to pursue to its conclusion. There is only an inconsequential tinkling now where late the trombone brayed. Some of the titles recall the earlier enthusiast: "The Lady with the Glass Torso," for instance, and "Milk at the Bottom of the Sea." But Mr. Williams is as insensitive to the noise of verse as to its imagery. "I think," he sings,—

> I think of the cow's tail, how all summer long
> It beat the shapes of harps into the air.

I'll bet it did!

the Phoenix Nest

I WAS saddened and bewildered when I read of Bob Benchley's sudden death. Even though I hadn't seen him for a long time, one always thought of him as being around, and an antidote to a great deal of sham, buncombe, and cant and cruelty in this world. My typewriter first wrote that word "sham" as "shame." Stet that too! At one time I used to see Bob a good deal, and MacGregor, his *fidus Achates*. MacGregor was an utterly fabulous man, adored Bob, and Bob made him even more fabulous. I cannot claim ever to have been one of Bob's best friends but we liked each other; at least, I know I liked him. And I remember that apartment of his at the Royalton

which Frank Sullivan describes in the best piece about Bob that I have read [*PM*, Tuesday, November 27: "A Friend Is Grateful"]. Bob's written word was *sui generis* (I was going to say "generous"—and why am I using all this Latinity?). He made me mad once by criticizing the plays of Shakespeare. This was late one night in West-side Tony's—the *real* Tony's it was in those days. I think at that late hour Bob merely claimed that Shakespeare was no playwright. He said it as he said everything, though firmly, with so engaging a smile that it took the curse off it. But he was very firm; which he also enjoyed. I remember one long afternoon in the Royalton (where the blinds were always drawn in the daytime and the cheerful electric lamps lighted), when quite a few people were draped over every available chair, sofa, etc., and one of those lovely hazes was setting in after a little serious drinking. Suddenly there was a tremendous noise out in the corridor, and I valiantly staggered forth to fight whoever it was, and nearly fell down that famous stair-well around which there should have been a running-track. Bob's only comment was that the noise had "scared the bejesus" out of him. It had out of me, too.

His more public triumphs are known to the world. No one could touch him at "cuckoo humor" in his many and various books. I, unworthy, am proud to have "The Early Worm" inscribed "To Bill on opening his house" and "Pluck and Luck" inscribed "To Bill that old peach." That was when I had a new apartment down on Abingdon Square. For the season just past I should recommend "How to Watch Football" and the chart on page 140 of "Pluck and Luck." This is the field "As Seen by George M. Grimsey, '99, Who Brought His Flask Along in Case He Got Cold." But hell, why particularize! There were a whole slew of Benchley books and you could crack any one of them anywhere and go into stitches. Then, of course, Bob went on the screen, and became immortal all over again in teaching people how to sleep, and kindred pursuits. Even in a bit part of a full-length-and-dress film he was likely

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to steal the show. As for his activities as a dramatic critic, they were astute. As an independent human being, he was an independent human being. And if you think that is easy to be, you're crazy. Frank Sullivan mentions the time Bob went to Boston to testify concerning some louseworthy remarks by a jurist anent the Sacco-Vanzetti case. In his writings Bob was always the frightened, harried, bewildered average man. I guess, at that, he was pretty darned scared sometimes; but I can't imagine it ever preventing him from doing what he thought needed doing. It didn't in that instance. When he and Heywood Broun were alive and kicking, it was a good time for America. What we have left now are Bilbo, Hearst, Rankin, and McCormick. I will never know why the insectivora persist and the great men die.

Great? you ask. Sure. Great. Want to make something out of it?

Great enough for me, anyway. So long, Bob. Hope I see you again. You were aces with me.

* * *

THE LAODICEANS

"Time will not wait."
— *General Eisenhower.*

No one spoke out. I looked upon their faces,
Their eyes withheld from nothing that they named,
The stiff thin mouth, lip curled against the graces,
The gaze remote, even from manhood shamed
And evil jubilant. In analytic
Distaste for the tormented and the weak,
They were absolved, the esthete and the critic.
They were superior. They did not speak.

The foolish died, the fond, the men of passion,
The ignorant, the befooled, the sorry press—
And burst the prisons of captives in that fashion;
And were tortured; and were mangled; more or less.
But here—here no one spoke. Not one warm word.
Not one warm human gesture. No one stirred.

There were those increased in goods and bland of feature
That having need of nothing yet were blind,
Wretched and naked, the tyro with the teacher
Of what it is that Man goes forth to find.
Gold they possessed, that never in any fire
Had yet been tried; raiment not far to seek
That yet was none; descended son from sire.
They were withdrawn, remote. They did not speak.

Wage earners died, the laborer, the hewer
Of wood, the drawer of water, serf of wage,
Factory drudge, mechanic, mighty doer
At forge, in mine; the clerkly, sad and sage.
These seated ones, from aught that had occurred
Looked up, looked down, looked outward. No one stirred.

There were those legislators grave and prayerful
(Ernest to prove the dead had badly planned),
Those of one lucky vote whereby their careful
Concern for us had not disarmed our land;
Now holier far than they who met the danger
With long foreseeing and vigilance of thought,
To his own dull past each shrugged himself a stranger,
Pursuing advantage still, by nothing taught.

These folded hands on amplitude of being
And took unto themselves a ripe increase,
Shredding all plans proposed, with sage foreseeing
That public hardship held the spoils of Peace:
God bless our Home, wheezed on the old harmonium.
(*Please do not mention uranium or plutonium!*)

Somewhere black bread and gruel were hard to come by.
Somewhere in rubble the rooftree of a home
Thrust like a gesture we recognize the dumb by. . . .
Somewhere a wooden ploughshare turned thin loam
And wet green paddies steamed, and skins were tawny,
And beggars swarmed in rags and picked their lice,
And wither-breasted mothers and their scrawny
And wailing infants chewed a little rice.
Expedient and predestinate aphasia!
Here was the feast, here each a Barmecide.

And what was Europe, what the East and Asia,
Or what, indeed, the rising bitter tide
Far nearer home. Demanding due respect
Sat ownership, anointed and elect.

Yet would an eye slide sidewise at another,
Betwixt thin lips the tip go of the tongue
Uneasily. "What are you thinking, brother?"
Ran ratlike round the mind. These never young
Had never felt their blood in sudden riot,
Nor shared in Man's outrageousness or shame.
O that was certain! They were too cool, too quiet,
Such dereliction never theirs to name.

And who were these, and what had done, deserving
This hell marmoreal, Hell could never break?
Had they held course deliberate and unswerving?
Had they turned anchorite for virtue's sake?
One thing they seemed, in the cold mist confined:
Alien to flesh and blood and kin and kind.

When the Devil throve, their courteous voices never
Lifted above some decorous derogation;
Or else they ranted that evil triumphed ever;
But few could have surmised they had a nation.
Mankind they claimed; but when Mankind was stricken
Even to the soul, they looked fatigued and proud,
Fearing profoundly to feel their pulses quicken.
Their spirits wore an antiseptic shroud.

I know there is a horror worse than dreaming
In these emasculate women, clay-cold men.
In that I stood among them even in seeming
My human guilt was well rewarded then.
There, in my dream, they sat, each soul alone.
And no one spoke. And time dripped on the stone.

WILLIAM ROSE BENET.

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(Continued from page 33)

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The Crostics Club

By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

FOR information about the "Spirit of '76," with painstaking accounts and references, we are grateful to (1) Orville Swett Poland, Reading, Mass.; Anne Coppinger, Winter Park, Fla.; and Ernest H. Wilkens, President of Oberlin College —all of whom add to our knowledge about Archibald Willard's painting in Abbott Hall, Marblehead, Mass.; (2) to Mrs. Richard Ederheimer, New York City, and Miss Elizabeth Wood, Philadelphia, who introduce us also to Tompkins S. Matteson's "Spirit of '76"; (3) to Lester Grosvenor Wells, Supervisor of Collections, Syracuse University Library, and to G. and C. Merriam Company, publishers of Webster reference books, who sent me authoritative accounts of the two works.

Mrs. Ederheimer, at a pleasant afternoon tea in her artist husband's spacious studio, handed me a memo supplied in a talk with Metropolitan Museum experts. President Wilkens informs us that Wellington, Ohio, just south of Oberlin, where Willard lived for many years and where he is buried, cherishes Willard's memory with justifiable pride, and that the public library there has an extensive file of material about him. Mr. Poland and Miss Coppinger write from personal experience with Marblehead's history.

Mr. Wells, who for several years has been assembling material on Matteson, has sent me a typewritten copy of an article on that artist written by William Howe Downes, in the "Dictionary of American Biography," so colorful that I think you will all want to read it; and Mr. Wells also gives me more bibliographical reference material if any of you would like to investigate on your own account. Further, he includes the following description of Matteson's "Spirit of '76":

> The scene is a livingroom or kitchen of a colonial house. A son stands in uniform and is taking a musket from an elderly father. An elderly bonneted woman stands to his left lifting her finger in admonition. A crouching child at the feet of the elderly woman appears to be playing with articles of the soldier's equipment. A woman bowed in grief (presumably the boy's mother) kneels at the feet of the boy. Through the open door may be seen a soldier approaching, probably to hasten the soldier-boy's leave-taking.

Of the Willard picture, the more familiar through popular reproductions, President Wilkens writes:

> The central figure in the painting represents Willard's father; the model for the fifer was Hugh Mosher of Wellington; and the model for the drummer boy was Harry K. Devereux (later to become a well-known sportsman), whose father, General J. H. Devereux, bought the painting and gave it to the town of Marblehead, his birthplace.

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down, the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

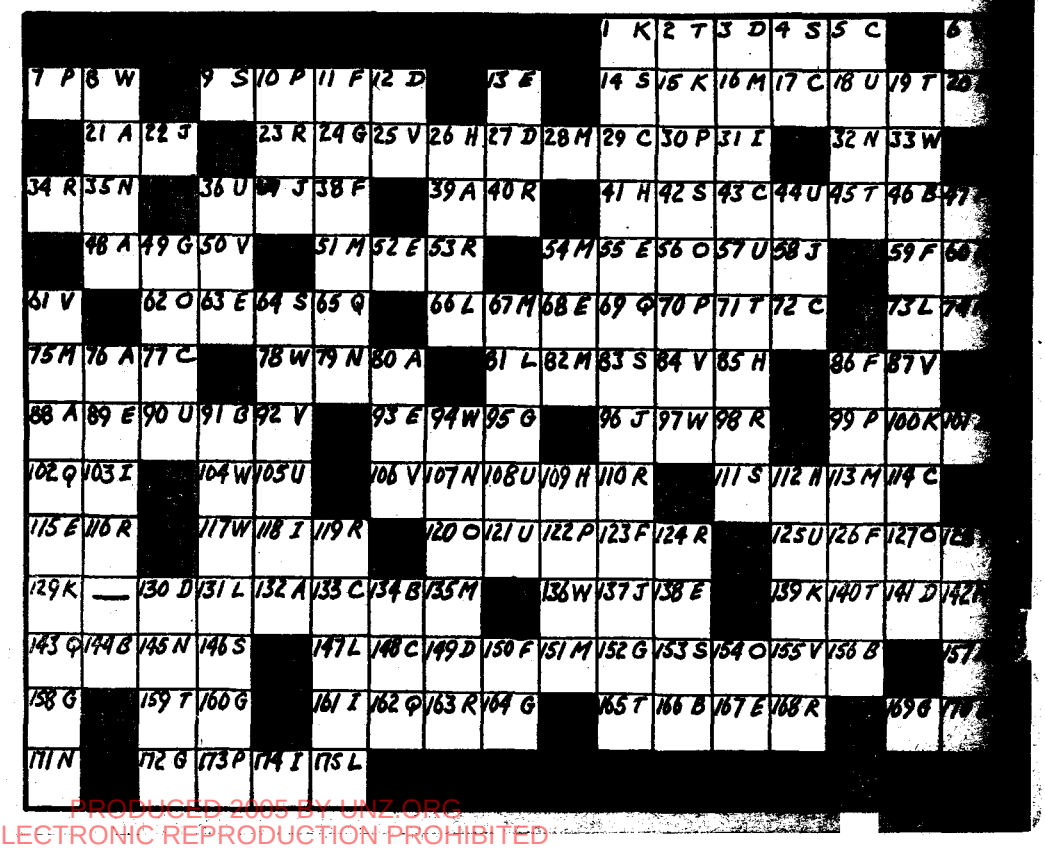
The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 32 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Pertaining to word formation.
B. One of the five nations of the Indian Confederacy, N.Y., 1570.
C. College of Oxford named after a "knocker."
D. A raising of spirits by hope, etc.
E. A minute calcareous rodlike structure (surface and bottom of ocean).
F. Hartford minister, intimate of Mark Twain and other authors (1838-1918).
G. Vegetable anatomy.
H. Chinaman in Bret Harte's famous poem.
I. Foaming; light.
J. The combination of lights and darks (Jap. Art).
K. Father of Methuselah (Bib.).
L. Correctly adjusted to.
M. Obscured.
N. New Testament of the Douay Bible.
O. Observing with fixed attention.
P. The "Silurist" poet (1622-95).
Q. Widemouthed pitchers or jugs.
R. Rigorously just (derived from Gr. Myth.).
S. A hoop skirt.
T. "Castle" residence of Gladstone.
U. Communication of qualities or emotions by influence of sympathy, example, etc.
V. English round folkdance for eight, now often revived.
W. Indian of Nootka tribe, Wakashan stock (Vancouver Is.).

WORDS

76 170 80 132 39 48 21 88
144 91 134 166 156 46
133 72 5 114 77 17 29 43 148
12 130 101 149 3 27 141
68 55 13 93 138 63 52 115 167 89
23 38 86 11 59 150 47 126
172 49 164 169 160 95 158 152 24
41 26 85 112 109
31 118 161 174 103 20
137 37 96 58 22
100 129 15 1 139
66 131 175 73 81 147
67 82 75 151 54 28 51 16 135 113 142
79 107 171 145 32 35 74
127 120 56 154 62
70 173 122 30 99 7 10
69 162 65 102 143
119 168 163 53 110 23 60 40 157 124 34
116 98
14 42 83 4 9 111 153 64 146
2 128 165 140 19 159 71 45
90 57 105 44 125 18 108 121 36
87 155 6 106 92 61 25 84 50
136 97 104 94 8 78 117 33



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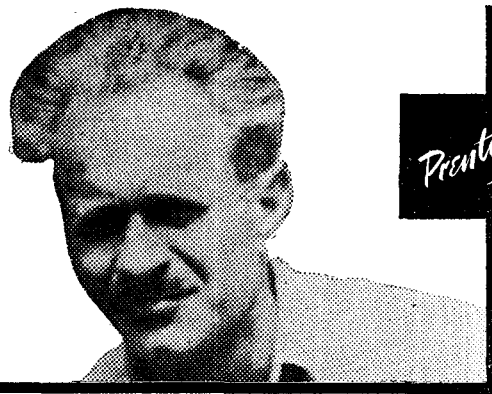

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